EDUCATION AMONG THE MENNONITES OF AMERICA

Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

EDUCATION AMONG THE MENNONITES OF AMERICA

By

JOHN ELLSWORTH HARTZLER, PH. D.

President of Witmarsum
Theological Seminary

With Introduction
by
PROFESSOR ELMER E. S. JOHNSON, PH. D.

The Central Mennonite Publishing Board
Danvers, Illinois
1925

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INTRODUCTION

The Mennonites have generally been far more concerned about a life of service than the recording of their beneficent deeds. Especially is this true of them during the first century or more of their life in America. We look in vain today for records of their conferences during the eighteenth century; only now and then do we have the opportunity to bring from some hitherto inaccessible source information enlightening us on their dealings concerning the religious and educational life among them in colonial times.

History associates them with the first to voice their protest against human slavery in America; the largest book printed in colonial times deals with the violence done their forebears through more than one century of horrible persecutions inflicted in the name of Christian faith. For more than two hundred and twenty-five years they have quietly but consistently endeavored to render relief to their less fortunate brethren driven through many lands. Until the very present they have striven to perform a service for humanity that compares favorably with the very best. Their contributions to civilization are of the highest, whether performed in the field of religion, of education, of science, or in the splendor of their morality exhibited in the homes and in the communities where they reside.

Among other things they have given America the values of a Christopher Dock; they have had among them men by the name of Rittenhouse, names too well known to need further comment. From out of the endeavors of more or less silent decades there emerged a desire among them to promote the interests of higher education. This desire became nation-wide among the several groups of this people in the western world, culminating in achievements involving courageous initiative and unstinted sacrifice. The pages which follow recount the development of an educational system heroic and noble in its way of progress.

President John E. Hartzler is eminently fitted to write a book of this kind. Both on account of his sympathetic spirit and his intel-

lectual attainments, Doctor Hartzler is splendidly qualified to perform this service for the common good of all. He has assembled material hitherto unknown to the field of pedagogy, and he has very fittingly told the story of a great educational movement with a competence and an impartiality that makes the production all the more valuable. It should serve as a source of inspiration to all students of history, and more particularly to the young Mennonites of America.

ELMER E. S. JOHNSON.

Hartford Theological Seminary,
April 15, 1925.

PREFACE

The primary interest of this book is not Church history but the development of certain educational ideals, attitudes and movements of a people having their origin in the Religious Reformation four hundred years ago. It has been the aim to collect, systematize and interpret the educational events in the nearly two hundred and fifty years of Mennonite history in America, with the added aim of estimating the religious, ethical and educational ideals of this people with the sincere hope of stimulating more positive and constructive purpose and action in their educational endeavors.

Special effort has been made to be biographical in method, if such a thing is possible with ideas and institutions, permitting the reader to live as nearly as possible in and with the ideals and movements. The purpose has been to present a body of educational and institutional facts and events sufficient to justify general conclusions on their philosophy of education as well as to venture at some hazards a suggestive program for future procedure within the denomination.

In Part I is presented just enough history and ethics to form a sufficient background for a proper understanding of the educational movements and ideals in the denomination. In Part II is given the historic development in elementary and religious education since 1683 to the present time. In Part III appears only the briefest summary of interesting and important facts in the development of collegiate institutions, with the suggestion of a possible program.

In this presentation the author has in mind the average layman as well as the critical and professional student of educational history in America. He has been free, and at times severe, in his criticism, even to the extent which may seem unjust to some, but only with the hope that the reactions and responses would make for a better day and a more efficient educational policy within the denomination.

Denominationalism for denominationalism's sake alone has no future. The only justification for any denomination is on the condition that it makes some unique contribution to the Kingdom of God.

Mennonitism must become conscious of the fact that only to the extent that it maintains the foundation principles of its original faith, namely, faith in an open Bible for all men with freedom of interpretation; a faith which urges entire freedom of conscience, and yet honors Divine authority; and a faith which urges religious toleration and brotherliness both toward those within and those without the group, only to this extent will the denomination remain increasingly necessary in the world. The denomination must become conscious of the fact that to the degree that it departs from that faith to that degree it makes itself unnecessary and useless in the world. Aside from effective and efficient education this consciousness can not be produced.

In the preparation of this book many personal obligations have accumulated. I am indebted to my students who have aided me materially in the collection of historical data from various sections of the country. I am under particular obligation to President J. W. Kliewer of Bethel College for valuable information; to the Doctors Elmer E. S. Johnson and A. J. Wm. Myers of Hartford Theological Seminary with whom I spent a happy and profitable year in special research; to Doctor C. Henry Smith and Dean Noah E. Byers of Bluffton College for important suggestions and vital criticism of final manuscripts; and to John F. Funk of Elkhart, Indiana, for the use of his library and special documents. To all of these persons, and others, I am deeply indebted and hereby acknowledge heartily my thanks and appreciation.

THE AUTHOR

Witmarsum Theological Seminary,
Bluffton, Ohio.

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PART I

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER I

THE MENNONITES IN EUROPE

The roots of Mennonitism run back to, if not previous to, the 14th and 15th centuries. It is not possible to understand or appreciate American Mennonitism without going back into these centuries and acquainting ourselves with the origin, ideals and convictions of this people. It is not the aim of this chapter to give anything like a complete history of the European Mennonites. The aim is simply to relate sufficient history, and of a particular line, such as will secure a sufficient background for a study of the educational history of the Mennonites of America. There are major facts and movements in the early history of the denomination which have direct bearing upon the present status of their educational system in America.

Before the Great War Mennonites were found, and had churches, in The Netherlands, in Switzerland, Germany, Russia, France, and in Galicia, with a total European membership of about 175,000. Russia had about 85,000; The Netherlands, 65,000; Germany, 20,000.* Since the war many of the European Mennonites, especially from Russia, have emigrated to America.

THE REFORMATION

1. *Resident Forces.* For several hundred years Europe was in preparation for the great religious reformation. The Crusades, bringing various countries and peoples together, gave them a new point of view. The fall of feudalism and the invention of gun powder; Copernicus with his theory of astronomy and a vaster universe; the rediscovery of Greek life and culture; all of these, with the discovery

* Smith—The Mennonites—p. 333

of America (1492), the invention of the printing press (1477), and the Renaissance (1450-1550), entered largely into the rebuilding of Europe and the making of the classical and religious reformation a reality. With the discovery of America the whole world conception was changed and the spirit of pioneering was planted in the hearts of men. With the invention of the printing press the world became a reading world. With the Renaissance came the conviction that the quest for knowledge was unlimited and that the truth of things became the inalienable right of all men. The center of interest was now shifted from the cloister seclusion to the world of activities. Religion was not disavowed, but it was stripped of its stern and inflexible formality. Men, and not dogma, became the center of interest.

2. *Demand For Deeper Spiritual Life.* The rise of formal creed and papal authority from the 4th to the 10th century laid the foundation for the "dark ages". Education became formal, limited and esoteric. Superstition and ignorance were on the throne. The Church accepted as her task that of maintaining a static past. The Bible was a closed and practically unknown book. Aside from the corruption in the Church many of the priests could neither read nor write. Religion had degenerated into mere form. The Roman priesthood had usurped authority even above the sacred scriptures, and those who dared to differ with them were treated as heretics, persecuted and even martyred.

Interesting side lights will be thrown upon early Mennonitism if we keep in mind the fact that in Germany the Renaissance and the Reformation were practically the same thing. In the South, Italy for example, the Renaissance was largely in classical and pagan literature. In the North, Germany, Holland, Etc., the center of interest was in Patristic and Christian literature. The South was interested in personal culture; the North in morals and religion. The South was individualistic and self-centered; the North was social and reformatory. The interests of the 15th century were literary and aesthetic. The interests of the 16th century were ethical and theological.* In view of these conditions it is not difficult to see why the Anabaptist

* Monroe—History of Education—p. 401

movement was found largely in Germany, Switzerland, and Holland, rather than in Italy and the South.

Those persons within the Roman Church desiring a deeper spiritual life had no intention of withdrawing from the Church. Their aim was to purify the body from within. For several hundred years such efforts were being made to result only in failure. The Waldenses, in the 13th century, made an effort through their leader, Peter Waldo, but failed. The Waldenses retained their membership in the Church, at the same time they formed a society which held its own separate meetings, their primary aim being to bring their members to experience spiritual regeneration. This was one of the resident forces at work which finally found expression in the reformation movement and especially in the Anabaptist movement, out of which in turn grew the Mennonites.

3. *Reformation Leaders.* Progress and reforms seldom, if ever, start with established authorities. Progress and reform result when the masses, because dissatisfied with the order of things, collect about the leader or leaders of their choice, leaders who give promise of executing the wish and desire of the masses. Evidently the names of many of the pioneer leaders of the Reformation never reached the pages of history. Moral and religious evolution move slowly and it is not difficult to see how many generations were needed to work in comparative seclusion in order to prepare the way for those who did finally succeed.

Such men as Martin Luther (1483-1546) in Germany, Zwingli (1484-1531) in Switzerland, Menno Simon (1496-1559) in Holland, John Calvin (1509-1564) in France, and John Knox (1505-1572) in Scotland, were able to succeed largely because of the efforts of such men as Peter Waldo (died about 1262) at Lyons, France; John Huss (1369-1415), Professor at University of Prague, John Wyclif (1324-1384) in England. These men, with others, were the forerunners of the Reformation and deserve no small credit in preparing the way for their successors.*

* Hurst—Short Hist. of the Christian Church—p. 195f

THE MENNONITES

1. *Origin.* While there was considerable identity between the Waldenses and the Mennonites, yet, it can hardly be demonstrated that there is any organic connection. Attempts to connect the Mennonites with the Waldenses, or even the twelve Apostles, have always failed.† What is actually known is that there appeared rather suddenly just at the dawn of the Reformation, in almost every Christian country, little groups of men and women, who were determined to reconstruct Christianity after the New Testament model. Like the Waldenses they esteemed the creed of the primitive Church; unhindered approach to God, without priest or saint as mediator, was to them a great right. These numerous scattered groups of men and women, bent on reconstructing Christianity, were soon given the name "Anabaptists", and it is in this group that we find the origin of the Mennonites.

2. *The Anabaptist Movement.* It must be kept in mind that the Anabaptist movement included a number of sects, perhaps forty,* all of whom agreed on many essential points. They all were "Independents" and "Separatists". They agreed on adult baptism, complete separation of Church and State, and separation from the world. It is difficult to say, says Dr. Smith, how many belonged to one group and how many to another; but it is fair to assume that the large body were of the peaceful, non-resistant type. At any rate, soon after 1535 practically all of these other groups disappeared, and on the Continent only the non-resistant groups survived. These surviving groups were later known as "Mennonites". ‡

(1) *The Occasion For Anabaptist Movement.* It seems evident that Luther and Zwingli modified their original radical ideas in their departure from the Roman Church; they retained certain elements and principles of the old Church. It was this modification, which looked to some like a compromise, which gave rise to the Ana-

† Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 17

* M. Christoff Erhardus—Wahrhaftige Historia von den Münsterischen Brüdern und Wiedertäufern, Etc. (1589).

‡ Smith—The Mennonites—p. 38

baptist movement. The demand was for a more radical departure from the Roman Church. The movement was spontaneous at first and was not an organized movement. The exact date of the beginning of the movement can hardly be determined. There was no particular leader at first.

It was about 1525, in Switzerland, South Germany, Moravia, Lower Rhine, when the Anabaptist movement became a separate organization by the official adoption of adult baptism only. The movement grew in Switzerland, Germany, and in Holland in particular.

(2) *Growth of The Movement.* Times and conditions were most favorable for such a movement. For three centuries resident forces had been working. The Waldenses had existed in many places where Anabaptism was now flourishing. The new movement appealed to the common people and gave them hope to attain their deepest religious desires. The new Church, patterned after the primitive Church, gave the common man hope for social and economic relief. Free access to the Bible, a long lost and closed book, created great interest among the masses. After the middle of the 15th century Bibles were printed in both German and Dutch and distributed among the people. These conditions made possible the rapid growth of the movement.

(3) *Doctrines and Ideals.* The majority of the Anabaptists were a peaceful folk, law-abiding, asking nothing but that they might be permitted to worship God in their own way, and wishing no ill or harm to those who might differ with them. There was a mystical element in their doctrine, the foundation stone of which was the conviction that to be a Christian is to be united by faith to the Son of God, so as to be a partaker of His nature. One can not be a Christian by inheritance, by education, or by sacraments; but by repentance, faith and regeneration.*

Briefly summarized the Anabaptist doctrines and ideals should include the following propositions: (1) The Church is an independent, voluntary group of believers banded together for the purpose of worship. Separation of Church and State, and religious toleration

* Vedder—Heroes of The Reformation (Hubmaier), p. 14f.

are logical corollaries of the independent Church. (2) Infant baptism, the sign of initiation into the universal State Church, has no place in the voluntary institution. Adult baptism administered to the voluntary believer must be the initiatory symbol. (3) The Bible is the only guide of faith and practice, the New Testament in particular. (4) The office of magistrate can not be filled by the Christian. Government is a divine institution ordained to protect the righteous and to punish the wicked. The Christian must be obedient to his rulers, pray for them and pay taxes to support the government. (5) The Christian can not take up the sword; love must be the ruling force in all social relations. To take the life of another is wrong under any circumstance. (6) Church discipline is to be secured through the "ban", used to exclude the disobedient from the rights and privileges of membership. (7) The Lord's Supper is to be regarded merely as a memorial to the death and suffering of Christ, and not as containing the "Real Presence". (8) It is wrong to take an oath.*

(4) *Persecutions.* The apostles of the Anabaptists traveled extensively and were gladly received. Their simple life, free and simple Gospel, their invitation to repentance and regeneration, were gladly received by the dissatisfied masses. It was because of the popularity of the movement with the common people, as well as because of certain radical doctrines, that the movement in South Germany and Switzerland was subjected to severe and inhuman persecutions. Neither Luther nor Zwingli was strong on religious toleration. Luther, in particular, tended strongly toward the enforcement of his ideas of freedom with the old spirit of intolerance. The Anabaptists were falsely reported as revolutionists while at the same time their creed was positively against violence and war. They were classed with the Munzerites, fanatical revolutionists, with whom they had no connection whatsoever.†

In about the year 1529 a decree provided that all Anabaptists should be executed without trial. Both Catholics and Protestants consented and Anabaptists were hunted down like wild beasts. By the year 1530 nearly 2,000 had been executed. Thielman Van Braght,

* Smith—The Mennonites—p. 39f.
† Barclay—The Inner Life of Religious Societies—p. 81

in his Martyr's Mirror, records many cases where Anabaptists were burned, drowned, beheaded, tortured, beaten with rods, or buried alive. Felix Manz was among the first martyrs.†

What is true concerning the persecutions of the Anabaptists is almost literally true concerning the Mennonites who immediately followed them. Because of their desire for radical reform, their peculiar doctrines, and their refusal to conform to either Roman or State Church, they were treated as traitors, disloyal, rebellious, heretical and untrustworthy subjects of the State. State and Church authorities made no distinction between the Mennonites who were a quiet, peace-loving and non-resistant group, and the fanatical, revolutionary and chiliastic Munsterites.

3. *Menno Simon.* Menno was about twenty-two years younger than Luther. He was not the founder of the denomination, but was the early and most influential leader who came into the movement soon after it started. Menno was born in 1496, at Witmarsum, Friesland, one of the provinces of The Netherlands. He was a contemporary of Melanchthon, Calvin, Bullinger and Bucer, some of the great theological giants of the 16th century. He was also a contemporary of Rabelais, the great opponent of formality and insincerity and friend of science, and Erasmus, the great advocate of the "New Learning" as a most important factor in the much needed moral, religious, educational, and social reform.

Though educated for the Roman priesthood and having served for a time in this capacity, Menno, at the age of forty (1536), upon invitation, was baptised and joined himself with the Anabaptist movement, having withdrawn from the Roman Church in 1524. He was ordained to preach by Obbe Philip. No sooner had he begun to preach when the imperial government offered one hundred guilders for his head. He fled constantly from one place to another. He preached, baptised and organized churches in Russia and Lithuania. His last years were spent at Wuestenfeld, a village between Altona and Lubeck. He died on January 13th, 1559, and was buried in his own garden.*

† Vedder—Heroes of the Reformation (Hubmaier)—p. 20f.
* Pennypacker—Penna. German Society—Vol. 9—p. 63f

4. *Doctrinal Position of Menno.* On matters of doctrine and ideals Menno agreed with the essential teachings of the Anabaptists noted above. He held individual views on a few things; for example, the doctrine of the incarnation, taken likely from Melchior Huffman; the view that Jesus came into the world without partaking in the least of the human nature of Mary. He was constantly challenged by anti-Mennonites to defend his positions. He entered several debates, the leading points being: The Incarnation, the Origin of Sin, Baptism, Sanctification, The Two Natures, Oaths, Divorce, and the Call to The Ministry.

Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and others were more conspicuous and played a more public and popular role in the Reformation, but in no sense a more important role than did Menno Simon. In fact Luther and Zwingli took the easy way in joining with the State and in not separating too far from the Roman Church. Menno played a far more difficult part in the arena of the Reformation. Luther and Zwingli relied upon the force of arms, if necessary, to bring about their desired ends; Menno relied on the force and appeal of love only.

5. *The Dort Confession.* It should be mentioned here, though noted more fully later, that for nearly one hundred years or more, the Mennonites were without a written creed or confession of faith. It was not until 1632, at Dort, Holland, that a Confession was officially adopted.* Lack of means of travel and communication as well as opposition on the part of State and Established Church, prevented the Mennonites from coming before the public eye more than was necessary. Each group, in its particular locality, continued to worship God with no written creed or confession, and with the Bible as the sole guide in faith and practice.

MENNONITE EDUCATION IN EUROPE

While it is evident that Mennonites generally during their early days were opposed to education and those who possessed it, yet,

* Note. It is interesting to note that in the same year John Amos Comenius, one of the most important representatives of the Realistic Movement, completed his "Didactic Magna", one of the most remarkable educational treatises ever composed.

among them were men, leaders in religious thought, who favored education and advocated it.

1. *During Reformation Times.* During the time of theological and ecclesiastical reconstruction in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland during the 16th century, when old faiths were cast aside and when men began to investigate and conclude for themselves, the Mennonites had among them men of great educational attainments and convictions; men who compared very favorably with men of other Protestant movements; men who were really conspicuous in the religious and philosophical thought and literature of that day.

Of the early Mennonite educational leaders Hans (John) Denck is perhaps among the most popular. Denck was a contemporary of Luther and Zwingli and possessed a thorough education. He was a graduate of the University of Basel with the Master of Arts degree, and was particularly proficient in Greek, Latin, and the Hebrew languages. He was both a scholar and a philosopher. He was the author of many books, but owing to the Luther and Zwingli persecutions, his works were largely destroyed. One of his works—"Divine Law in The World", was recently discovered. Dr. Ludwig Keller, writing concerning this work says, that among all the polemics written he "has not found one which comes anywhere near to the depth and purity of this little work." Keller says further: "There was a time when the name of John Denck was on the banner of every great party, when vast multitudes were eager to hear him and gain from his writings the zeal which enabled them courageously to suffer torture and death for their faith. Denck was for many years the spiritual leader of a great party in Germany."*

The work of Denck which most of all demonstrated his scholarly attainments was a translation from Hebrew to German of the Prophetical Books of the Old Testament. This work was completed on April 13th, 1527, thirteen editions appearing during the first three years. It was read all over Germany. Both Zwingli and Luther used it in the production of their translations. Luther copied ver-

* Keller—Ein Apostel der Wiedertäufer—p. 111.

batim from it. It was Baum, the theologian, who said of Denck: "He was three hundred years ahead of his times."*

Menno Simon, noted above, while not so highly educated as Denck, was however, a master of Latin, and also knew Greek. He wrote and debated incessantly on points of doctrine. His principal writings cover two dozen or more of vital and living issues of his day. His great contribution during the Reformation and the promotion of the Anabaptist movements was not so much in his educational attainments as in his capacity for leadership and organization.

Three other men deserve mention in this connection, namely, Felix Manz, Conrad Grebel, and Balthasar Hubmeier. These men were contemporaries of Luther. Manz was well educated and a master in Hebrew. Grebel was highly educated, having studied in Vienna and Paris. He was a master in Greek and wrote Latin fluently. Hubmeier was a man of thorough education and of great influence. He studied philosophy and theology under Dr. Eck. He was for a time instructor in the University of Freiburg, and also professor of theology at Ingolstadt.

2. *More Recent Movements in Germany, France and Holland.* More recent years show more activity in education among the Mennonites of Europe. This is especially true in Germany and Holland.

(1) *The Teyler Institution.* Perhaps no institution has made the Dutch Mennonites more famous than the Teyler Institution. The dangers of one hundred and fifty years ago in Holland were not especially materialistic in nature, but in the subtle changes which were taking place in their deepest religious convictions. It was for the purpose of controlling this situation that Peter Teyler Vander Hulst, about 1780, established "The Society for The Extension of Knowledge and For The Establishment of the Christian Religion." The original family name was not Teyler but Taylor. The founder of this society left considerable capital for the founding of the institution. Premiums are offered by the institution for the best answers to questions of utmost variety, of a religious and scientific character. Not only Mennonite scholars, but men of every conceivable religious

* Keller—Ein Apostel der Wiedertäufer—p. 237

type, in Holland, France and Germany, compete for honors.*

(2) *The School at Weierhof.* At this place the Mennonites have established a school of higher education. It was M. Loewenberg who set in motion forces which gave rise to this institution of learning. In 1867 he started on a small scale to educate Mennonite youths. His work soon found support; buildings were erected and many young people received instruction. It was in 1884 that Dr. E. Groebel, a former pupil of the school, became director. From time to time rapid progress was made, and by 1901 a number of buildings, with about 170 students, and a faculty of eighteen members, were in the institution. The courses of instruction were primarily Academy and Preparatory, though full collegiate work was in view. In the early days of this school the Mennonites in North Germany took an unfavorable attitude toward it. But in more recent years, before the Great War, a more friendly attitude was taken, the united Churches in Germany contributing 600 Marks annually to its support.†

(3) *The Mennonite Rescue and Educational Establishment.* In "Der Mennonitische Friedensbote", January 15th, 1872, appears the "Dritter Jahresbericht und Rechnung der Mennonitischen Rettungs- und Erziehungs-Anstalt zu Erincourt, Frankreich." In other words, The Third Year's Report of the Mennonite Rescue and Educational Establishment. The report is made by one Dr. J. Rich. According to the report the institution likely started about 1869, or earlier, and had for its aim both the rescue of poor children and their education. Evidently it was something of an elementary school, and was located at Erincourt, France. There is no evidence that the institution continued any great number of years.

(4) *The Seminary at Amsterdam.* It was noted above that during the first century of their existence the Mennonites generally grew suspicious of all learning, and of all scientific pursuits. They preferred what they called a "God-made", rather than a "man-made" ministry. Their ideal was to "be taught of God" in the great and only book, the Bible. But this, as time passed, led them to idolize the book. Soon some of the keener spirits among them saw that this

* Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 270f
† Mennonite Year Book and Directory—1902—p. 26

attitude meant disaster to the denomination. This, with leniency toward them by the State, permitting them to have their own churches, and to conduct their own services (about 1630), prepared the way for a change of attitude toward educated classes as well as education itself. During the 18th century a hunger for intellectual pursuits began to reveal itself among the younger men. They saw the need of an educated ministry. This desire for an educated ministry crystallized in the Mennonite Seminary at Amsterdam. It was felt that the old method of selecting religious leaders from among those having no training was wholly out of joint with the times, and was working ill effects.*

At the present time young Mennonites in Europe studying for the ministry spend five years at one of the national universities, the last two at Amsterdam, during which time the candidate is required to attend lectures in the Mennonite Seminary. Professors in the faculty of the Seminary are at the same time regular professors in the theological faculty of the City University.† Dosker is likely right in saying that the Mennonites gained organic oneness through the educated ministry, the thing which they at first despised and rejected.

In conclusion it is interesting to note that among the Dutch Mennonites there is to be found a goodly number of statesmen and State officials. There is also to be found a goodly number of historians among the Dutch and German Mennonites. The leniency granted to the denomination about 1630 in Holland, as well as in more recent years, has led them to larger and broader and more sympathetic educational and social attitudes. The conditions and tendencies in Europe, we shall note later, have direct bearing upon the present educational status in the denomination in America.

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* Brons—Taufgesinnten oder Mennoniten—p. 148

† Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 267f.

CHAPTER II

MENNONITES IN AMERICA

This chapter, because of its purpose and brevity, can not be a history of American Mennonites. The aim is to select only such materials as have a direct bearing upon the educational movements of the denomination.

The discovery of America offered a new world with untold opportunities to many Europeans. A land free from popes, priests and kings, free from static customs and traditions, appealed tremendously to a freedom loving people. To enter the new world with no traditions, no customs, no theological stage scenery already set; a world in which one may make his own traditions, customs, and decorate one's own stage on which to play one's part in life's drama, was very attractive to Mennonites.

WHY ANOTHER COUNTRY

1. *Economic Reasons.* As early as 1643 Father Jogues, a French Jesuit traveler, writing a letter in which he describes the "Manhate" settlement, makes mention of the religious groups there and names the "Calvinists", the "Catholics," "English Puritans", "Lutherans", and the "Anabaptists", here called "Menists". The name "Anabaptist" is frequently found in the old Colonial records of New Netherlands. Documents dated 1657 also mention the "Menonists". It is likely true that the first Mennonites coming to America were Dutch traders from Holland. Many of the Mennonites in Europe, especially in Switzerland, were poor and the advantages of America appealed to them.*

2. *Religious Reasons.* The desire for religious liberty, and the privilege of executing their own convictions, were among the primary motives bringing Mennonites to America. Mennonites in Europe

* Smith—The Mennonites—p. 95, 193.
Also Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York. Vols. I, II, IV, VI

were simply being tolerated in many parts; they were hindered in the free development of their ideals and convictions. In the Palatinate, as well as in other places, they were not allowed to own land; they were tenants and laborers. Special taxes and limitations were imposed on them. They were not allowed to bury their dead in the Church graveyards. America appealed to this industrious and oppressed people and the years from 1683 to 1740 witnessed large numbers of them coming to America, and settling in Pennsylvania, New York, North Carolina and Virginia.

3. *Freedom From Military Service.* As previously noted the Mennonites were strongly non-resistant and non-militaristic. They would not participate in war for any cause. Europe being almost constantly at war made it very difficult for a non-resistant people to live unmolested; they found themselves constantly facing military demands. In The Netherlands, however, the Mennonites enjoyed military exemption until the time of Napoleon, when, in 1810, The Netherlands were incorporated into the French Empire, and the end came to exemption privileges which the Mennonites had enjoyed for more than two hundred years. The universal military spirit, however, throughout Europe during and following the Napoleonic wars caused the Mennonites to fear that further wars and conflicts would make it impossible for them to maintain their non-resistant position.

In Russia, in 1870, a "Russianification" program was on and the special privileges which had been granted to the German Mennonites no longer held. The Russian language was to become universal; all schools were to be placed under Russian officials, and no one was to be exempt from military training. The result was that during the years 1874 and 1880 about seventeen or eighteen thousand Mennonites left Russia for America, settling in the United States and Canada.

In France the Mennonites had similar experiences. Protests were made against military service, and some privileges were granted, which some Mennonites accepted while others came to America. During the years 1820-1850 a number of Amish Mennonites from France came to America, settling in New York, Canada and Ohio (Fulton and Butler Counties), as well as in central Illinois.

4. *An Independent Church.* The original Mennonites of Eu-

rope stood for a free Church; free from all entangling alliances, whether State or other denominations. Europe promised little, if anything, to a people holding such views. In more recent years, before the Great War, Russia offered a bit more. Considerable freedom was granted. But in the days when the great bulk of Mennonites came to America Europe promised little to this people. Free and independent Church life was fundamental in Mennonitism and America offered the greater hopes in this respect.

5. *Personal Conscience.* Mennonites from the beginning considered neither kings, priests nor popes as final authority in matters of religion. God speaks to every man; revelation is not limited to church officials; the Bible is an open book for every person, and the Holy Spirit is teacher and guide for all, regardless of race or color or position in the world. These ideals necessarily resulted in the belief in personal and individual responsibility, which in turn must mean freedom of personal conscience, which freedom of personal conscience resulted in the Great War in the "conscientious objector". The right of dissent, whether in matters religious or political, has always been held by Mennonites. "They claimed a kind of divine-right democracy . . . Absolute individuality, controlled and absolutely ruled by the will of God."* America seemed to promise most to such a personal conscience.

To improve, then, their economic conditions, to exercise religious freedom, to escape military service, to enjoy an independent church life and freedom of conscience, as well as to escape persecution, Mennonites came to America. The move was greatly encouraged also by a law passed on April 25th, 1682, granting complete freedom of conscience to all religious bodies in Pennsylvania.†

IN AMERICA

The first known attempt on the part of the Mennonites to settle in America was that made in 1662, by Cornelis Plockhoy, a liberal

* Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 294

† Pennypacker—Penna. Magazine of Hist. and Biography— Vol. II, p. 117

minded Dutch communist of Mennonite ancestry. He, with a colony of twenty-five Mennonites, from Amsterdam, settled at Horekill, on Delaware Bay. This was about twenty years before William Penn came to America. "Two years later the settlement was completely broken up by the English. . . . Nothing is known of the fate of the colonists, with a single exception. In 1694 there came to the Mennonites at Germantown an old blind man accompanied by his wife. They had been wanderers in the American wilderness for thirty years. The brethren gave them a lot of ground and built them a house upon it. . . . The man's name was Cornelis Plockhoy, the leader of the Mennonite colony at Horekill."*

The efforts of Plockhoy some would call a failure. He has slept for more than two hundred years in obscurity, and yet he deserves equal mention with Sir Walter Raleigh, Cotton Mather and others. He cast his sympathies with the downtrodden and poor; he insisted on separation of Church and State; protested against the injury of the child mind with dogma; he insisted on "no lordship or servile slavery" as early as 1662 and refused the admission of slavery into his colony. In view of all this it is hardly just to speak of his work as failure.†

1. *The First Permanent Settlement.* The first permanent Mennonite settlement made in America was in the year 1683 at Germantown, Pennsylvania. For several years William Penn tried to interest the oppressed Mennonites of North Germany and Holland in America. About June 10th, 1683, a group of thirteen families left the town of Crefeld, Germany, and sailed for America, landing at Philadelphia on October 6th. of the same year. On October 24th. fourteen lots of land were surveyed for the Frankfort Company, of which Francis Daniel Pastorius was agent, and the next day the settlers began to dig cellars and to erect log houses, which were completed and in use before winter. The tract of land on which they settled extended on both sides of the present Germantown Avenue, between what is now Logan and Manheim Streets.

* Wickersham—Hist. of Education in Penna.—p. 164

† Pennypacker—Penna. German Society—Vol. IX, p. 263

This group of early settlers came to America without a minister or other religious leader. Having no meeting house they first met for worship in the homes of the settlers. In 1686, evidently in conjunction with Friends (Quakers), a community meeting house was erected. William Rittenhouse came to America in 1688 and it was through his efforts that a Mennonite Church was organized. He purchased lot number 19 and on a part of it, in 1708, a log meeting house was built, the first Mennonite Church in America. The present Germantown Mennonite Church stands now on the same spot. Rittenhouse was chosen to serve as minister about 1690 or a little later, serving as such until his death, February 18th, 1708, at the age of sixty-four years.* By the year 1712 the Mennonite population of Germantown and Skippack was about two hundred, while the Church membership was about one hundred.

In a letter written to Amsterdam, dated September 3d, 1708, . . . signed by Jacob Gaetschalck, Herman Karsdorp, Martin Kolb, Isaac von Sinteren, and Conradt Jansen, they present a loving and friendly request for some catechisms for the children and little Testaments for the young. Besides, Psalm Books and Bibles were so scarce that the whole membership had but one copy, and even the meeting house needed a Bible.†

2. *Contributions of The Mennonites.* A serious failing of the Mennonites is in the fact that, until recent years, they kept no records. As a result the world generally knows very little concerning this people. Historians have passed them by for the reason that little was known concerning them and the sources of information were limited. It was to the interest of the early Mennonites to avoid publicity and to live more or less in seclusion. The state of affairs in Europe during and after the Reformation made it inadvisable for them to write and publish their ideals and activities. Coming to America they continued their habit of avoiding the public eye, and today, in view of the fact that so little is generally known concerning them, it may come as a surprise to many to learn that the Mennonites were real pioneers in a number of important movements and ideals.

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* Penna. Magazine of Hist. and Biography—Vol. II. p. 120
† Ibid.

(1) *The First Formal Protest Against Slavery.* As noted above, Plockhoy, in 1662, in his colony at Horekill, had it definitely written in the constitution of the colony that slavery should be prohibited.* However, the first formal and written protest against slavery in America was brought by the Mennonites in 1688. It is evidently true that the Mennonites had no independent place of worship before 1690, and perhaps not before 1708. During this time they worshipped with the Quakers. In view of this it may be difficult to determine whether the protest was originated by the Mennonites or the Quakers. However, it is generally conceded that the Quakers themselves held slaves at the time,† and that the Mennonites never held slaves but were always opposed. The internal, as well as the external evidence of the protest itself leads one without doubt to the conclusion that the protest was instituted and promoted by the Mennonites but presented to the Yearly Meeting of the Friends for action. The protest came first to the Monthly Meeting, at which time the Friends reported as follows: "At our monthly meeting . . . we have inspected ye matter above mentioned & considered it we finde it so weighty that we think it not Expedient for us to meddle with it here, but do Rather commit it to ye consideration of ye Quarterly meeting. . . . "*

The protest was written in the home of Thomas Kunders, (now 5109 Germantown Avenue), a Mennonite, and signed by "gerret hendricks, derick op de graeff, Francis daniell Pastorius, Abraham op den graef." "A little rill there started which further on became an immense torrent, and whenever men hereafter trace analytically the causes which led to Gettysburg and Appomattox they will begin with the tender conscience of the linen weavers and husbandmen of Germantown."†

(2) *The First Book on Pedagogy.* Perhaps no people in America have been more backward in education than the Mennonites, yet, to this people goes the honor of having produced the first book

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* Pennypacker—Penna. German Society—Vol. IX. p. 229f.
Smith—The Mennonites of America—p. 90
† Jones—The Quakers in the American Colonies—p. 395
* Pennypacker—Penna. German Society—Vol. IX. p. 196f.
† Ibid.

on pedagogy written in America. Says Graves, "The Mennonites included in their system the famous schools of Christopher Dock, who in 1750 produced the first elaborate educational treatise in America."‡

Dock was a very able and successful teacher in the early Germantown settlement. His life and work, as well as his educational philosophy, we note more fully later. Sufficient here to say that Dock's SCHUL-ORDNUNG, or School Management, contains principles and ideals which today are regarded modern.

(3) *The First Paper.* William Rittenhouse, noted above, in association with others, built, in 1690, on the branch of the Wissahicken Creek, what Wickersham calls, "The first paper mill in America."* There is abundant evidence to substantiate this statement. The first mill was destroyed by a freshet in 1700; but in 1702 it was replaced by another, part of the old foundations may yet be seen. It was in this first mill, built by the first Mennonite preacher in America, that was manufactured the first paper produced in America. Samples of the paper are yet in existence.

(4) *A Denominational Mother.* At least one, and perhaps three, of the present day Christian denominations in America owe their origin to the Mennonite Church. The Baptists, the Brethren (Dunkards), and the Friends (Quakers) supply very good evidence for having originated in the Mennonite Church. Concerning the Baptists there can hardly be any question; concerning the Brethren and Friends there may be room for difference of opinion.

(a) *The Baptists.* Says Dr. Smith, "It is not generally known that the original Baptist Church in England grew directly out of the Mennonite Church in Amsterdam, and that they also owe to Mennonite influence the two cardinal principles of their faith, namely, the complete elimination of State from religion, and a church membership limited to the regenerated."† Says Pennypacker, "From the Mennonites sprang the general Baptist Churches of England, the first of them having an ecclesiastical connection with the parent So-

‡ Graves—A Hist. of Education in Modern Times—p, 100
Wickersham—Hist. of Education in Penna.—p. 222f

* Ibid—p. 161

† Smith—Mennonites in History—p. 17

cieties in Holland, and their organizers being Englishmen who, as has been discovered, were actually members of the Mennonite Church at Amsterdam."‡

Concerning the Baptists in this connection, Barclay speaks as follows: "We may therefore conclude that the first Arminian Baptist Churches in England were really Mennonites, and at least in some of these churches, the doctrines, practices and discipline of the Mennonites were practiced."* Barclay bases his evidence on three facts: (1) That the non-immersionist Baptist Church in England coincided in all the views of the Waterlander Mennonites, and signed the same confession. (2) That the members in the England congregation were accepted as members by the Mennonites as soon as they reached Holland, without baptism or any ceremony whatsoever. (3) That these Churches corresponded one with another, and that the English Churches agreed to refer their differences to the decision of the Mennonite Church, and that in 1626 there were in London Churches corresponding with the Waterlander Mennonites of Amsterdam.

It is stated further by Dr. Smith that at least ten of the present Philadelphia Churches, including one Evangelical, two Episcopal, one Presbyterian, were all first organized in the little Germantown Mennonite meeting house, many of which drew heavily on the Mennonites for their membership.

(b) *The Brethren.* This denomination originated in Germany in 1708, and in 1719 emigrated to America. They took the New Testament as their guide, as did the Mennonites. There were eight men at first, with Alexander Mack as their leader, and they desired baptism by triune immersion. "The seven desired their leader to baptise them, but he believed that he had never been baptised aright himself, and declined to baptise the others. It was then decided that one, be selected by lot, should baptise Mack, and he the rest of them, which was done in 1708 in the river Eder."† Mack himself did not

‡ Pennypacker—Penna. German Society—Vol. IX., p. 64
* Barclay—The Inner Life of Religious Societies—p. 72f
† Schaff—Herzog Encyclopedia— Article—"Dunkards"

come to America until 1729 when he landed in Philadelphia with the second company.

The statement made in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics to the effect that the Dunkards are in no way connected with the Mennonites or with the German Anabaptists may be difficult to prove.† It is difficult to explain the family relationships, the likeness in doctrine and practice, customs in dress, rural life, and general religious attitude, which are common to both denominations, if there never was any connection. It is also difficult to explain, if there be no connection, why Dunkard Churches sprang up early in practically all of the Mennonite communities in America. The Mennonites were in existence nearly two centuries before the Dunkards and history furnishes no record of any other denomination other than the Mennonites holding the particular doctrines and ideals which the Mennonites held and which evidently were taken over by the Dunkards. The only difference between the Mennonites and Dunkards is in the mode of water baptism and the method of observing the Lord's Supper, and these differences are not essential.

(c) *The Friends.* Robert Barclay, the noted English Quaker historian, and frequently quoted as trustworthy authority, says that affinity between the religious principles of the Friends and the Mennonites is so obvious, and in many respects so striking, that an actual descent of the former from the latter has been hinted as highly probable. "So clearly", says Barclay, "do these views correspond with those of George Fox, that we are compelled to view him as the unconscious exponent of the doctrine, practice and discipline of the ancient and stricter party of the Dutch Mennonites."*

The resemblance of the two sects, says Professor Oswald Seidensticker, of the University of Pennsylvania, is tested, not by their respective professions of faith, but by their agreement upon the salient features of the Christian life and duty. Both laid the greatest stress on inward piety, and a godly, humble life; considered all strife and warfare as unchristian, scrupulously abstained from taking oath,

† Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics—Vol. XI, p. 324

* Barclay—The Inner Life of Religious Societies—p. 77

declared against a paid ministry, exercised through their meetings a strict discipline, favored silent prayer, were opposed to infant baptism, and looked upon the established Church as unhallowed vessels of divine truth. The freedom of worship warranted to the Mennonites, and other sects in Holland, was the shelter under which the Friends introduced their doctrines, and organized their Society.†

Concerning the origin of the Baptist Church, then, there can be little question. Concerning the Brethren and Friends there remains an open question. The evidence is not sufficient to justify dogmatic conclusions. About all we surely know is that the Mennonites are considerably older than either Brethren or Friends and that the principles and ideals which they held from the beginning are held by the Brethren and Friends. And it may not be too much to infer that the Mennonites did furnish the inspiration for the origin of the following bodies. The same might be said concerning the Pilgrim Fathers. Mennonites in Holland and Germany, for nearly one hundred years, as well as in England, were advocates of "civil liberty and human rights", which inspired Robinson, and Brewster, and Carver, and Bradford, and Winslow, and made Plymouth Rock immortal. The "Separatist" Church under Robinson and Brewster in England found its way to Amsterdam and in this way came directly under Mennonite influences.* Dosker would also credit the Mennonite Church with the first established foreign Medical Mission, established in Java and Sumatra in 1849.†

CHARACTERISTICS

Due to the fact that from their origin, the Mennonites have avoided publicity, certain misrepresentations and misunderstandings have grown up on the part of the public. Newspapers, magazines and novelists have frequently published materials which represent the extremist and not the average Mennonite. For example, "Tillie, The Mennonite Maid", while true in some respects concerning certain

† Penna. Magazine of Hist. and Biography—Vol. II. p. 243f.
* Smith—Mennonites In History—p. 16
† Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 281

groups of "Old Order Amish", yet, very seriously misrepresents the American Mennonite.

In order to more fully appreciate and to better interpret the Mennonite attitude on education it is necessary to note briefly a few of the leading social, economic and ethical attitudes of the denomination.

1. *The Simple Life.* From the days of the Anabaptists this has been a chief characteristic of Mennonites; and yet we waited for a Frenchman to tell the world about "The Simple Life". Extravagance has always been discouraged. Simple living, simple homes, simple in dress, and simple Church life, are all Mennonite characteristics.

2. *Industrious.* Mennonites generally are a thrifty and industrious people. The Mennonite farming communities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Ontario, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and further west, are among the best in America. Lancaster County, Penna. today which has more than fifty organized Mennonite Churches, boasts of being the "Garden spot of the world."

3. *A Rural People.* Persecutions in Europe drove the Mennonites to the mountains and rural districts and away from the cities. Here they began farming and stock raising. They are still at it. Perhaps 95% of American Mennonites are rural people. This, however, is changing quite rapidly at present and the "urbanization of the rural mind" is going on among them.

4. *Unprogressiveness.* This characteristic is due largely to the fact that the Mennonites, until recent years, had no educated leadership. "The Faith of Our Fathers", without alteration whatsoever in principle or method, was the slogan. The past had become for them a hitching post rather than a guide post. All revelation has been given; all the good things worth saying have been said. Any new idea or method in religion was placed under taboo. Education was "worldly wisdom" and must be avoided. In industry and money making Mennonites have always been up to date; but in religion and education the tendency has been to lag behind.

In justice to a large majority of people it should be said that the progressive spirit, both in religion and education, is today in evidence.

The last quarter of a century has brought great changes, and the end is not yet. The next twenty-five years will see yet greater changes toward progress in education and religion.

5. *Intolerance.* A basic principle of original Mennonites was that of religious toleration. Today, in some sections of the denomination, the principle is practically ignored. Intolerance and unwise church discipline is one of the things which has prevented the Mennonite Church in America from becoming one of the large and influential denominations. If the Mennonites had held to the "Faith of Our Fathers" on the principle of religious toleration the story and state of American Mennonitism would be different. If our denominational leaders had been educated men during the past three hundred years, the Mennonite educational system of America would present quite a different front today.

It should be said, in closing, that there are now (1925) sixteen, perhaps seventeen, branches of Mennonites in America, with a strong tendency in some sections to bring about an organic union of the leading branches. The total Mennonite membership of the world is less than 300,000. In the United States in 1921 they reported 887 churches, 1488 ministers, and 82,722 members. This number is too low. The Old Mennonite Conference has about 35,000 members; the General Conference of Mennonites of North America, about 20,000, and the remaining number of something over 100,000 is divided among the smaller branches.

CHAPTER III

THE ETHICS OF MENNONITISM

Using the term "Ethics" in the commonly accepted sense, it is the present aim, without conscious apology or criticism, to point out certain ideals in matters of Christian life and conduct which the early Mennonites held; ideals which have a direct bearing upon their educational attitudes, and which have been the ultimate source of many of their educational problems.

The ethical roots of American Mennonitism are traceable to the Reformation period in Europe four centuries ago. The ethical ideals of the denomination can not be understood or appreciated by way of any other approach. The religious and educational conditions of the 15th. and 16th. centuries in Europe have important bearing upon the ethical and educational attitudes of the Mennonites.

From about 500 to 1,000 A. D. the religious attitude of the masses was that of unquestioned obedience to "authority"; the reception of all doctrine and statements of church officials, and dependence on formal truths dogmatically stated. About the 11th century Scholasticism came in and aimed to bring reason to the support of faith. It attempted to formulate religious beliefs into a logical system. All the education was conducted by the Church, the result being an undue emphasis on education as a preparation for the life to come. The educational system was considered so complete that change was not permitted, hence no progress. Its system of thought was nothing less than fetters on the intellect, a prison house for the soul. And as the religious and educational architects complete the prison house, those for whom they were building overthrew what they saw meant only slavery and imprisonment. It was from the ruins of these structures that the following generation laid the foundations for the structure of modern thought.* The break away from the attempt to adjust the individual into a perfect and complete system of ready made thought

* Monroe—History of Education—p. 352

to the development of free personality prepared the way for an intensified individualism. The break came with the Renaissance and one of the fruits of the revolt against the enslavement of the individual to dogmatic systems was the Anabaptist movement. The ethics of Mennonitism must be approached with these facts and movements clearly in mind.

It was in 1525, in Switzerland, South Germany, Moravia and Lower Rhine that the Anabaptist movement became a separate organization by the adoption of adult baptism only and upon confession of personal faith. Balthasar Hübmayer, a man of great learning, a doctor of theology, a priest in the Cathedral at Regenburg, joined the movement and became a great opponent of the Roman Church. Contemporary with Hübmayer were such men as Melchior Rinck, Johannes Hut, Hans Denck, Lüdwig Hätzer, Felix Manz, Wilhelm Röublin, and others. It was on February 7th, 1525, that Manz created a new Church in a private house near Zurich by instituting "believer's baptism" by sprinkling. This was the historic beginning of the Mennonite Church.†

There are four basic principles, products of the Renaissance, upon which Anabaptism and Mennonitism were founded, namely, (1) That the Bible is an open book to all men, peasant, priest, pope and king alike, and was to be given a spiritual interpretation. (2) The right of any person, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret this book. (3) The right of every person to an individual conscience in matters of religious belief and conduct, and the right of every person to dissent in matters political, social or religious.* (4) Religious toleration; the right of men to differ on non-essential matters and yet maintain a brotherly attitude toward each other. Christianity, in early Mennonitism, was not a religion which imposed dogmatic uniformity in matters of creed, but a religion of free spiritual fellowship with God and man.

It is not without significance that in their determination to maintain these great principles, the Mennonites came, as they did, to

† Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 30f.

* Barclay—The Inner Life of Religious Societies—p. 606
Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 212

America, without king, pope, priest, or bishop, not even a preacher or deacon among them. Nothing was more foreign to the early Mennonites than the Episcopal form of Church government. Mennonites from the beginning were congregational in government.

For nearly a century after their origin the Mennonites in Europe continued as a denomination without a universally accepted creed. The Bible, they said, was their creed. Geographical difficulties and lack of free communication and fellowship, during this time, resulted in differences of opinion on certain questions of faith. Consequently a conference was called at Dort, Holland, where fifty-one ministers from many Churches in Holland met on April 21st, 1632, and drew up one of the first Confessions to which all parties could subscribe. The Confession, evidently a summary statement of Mennonite faith during its first century, was then signed by fifty-one ministers and teachers who had met. This Confession has since been the leading one of all Mennonites, and it is from this that we must draw many of the ethical principles of American Mennonites.

ATTITUDE TOWARD THE STATE

The present attitude of Mennonites toward the State is largely a matter of inheritance from conditions in Europe four centuries ago. If the State then had been what the State in America now is, the story likely would be different. But with the state of affairs as they then were the Mennonites demanded entire separation between State and Church, and this led to individual withdrawal from any and all political matters.

The early Mennonites refused to have their children baptised, which was interpreted by government authorities as an act of disloyalty to the State, which misinterpretation resulted, in turn, in the severe persecutions mentioned by Thielman J. Van Braght, in his "DER BLUTIGE SCHAUPLATZ oder MARTYRER-SPIEGEL der TAUFS-GESINNTEN." (1659) These persecutions led the Mennonites to believe that the State was evil.

However, the denomination believed that the State, as well as all governments, had a place in the providence of God and should there-

fore be respected and honored.† In the 1632 Confession the following article appears:

> "We also believe and confess, that God has instituted civil government, for the punishment of the wicked and the protection of the pious; and also further, for the purpose of governing the world-governing countries and cities; and also to preserve its subjects in good order and under good regulations. Wherefore we are not permitted to despise, blaspheme, or resist the same; but are to acknowledge it as a minister of God and to be subject and obedient to it, in all things that do not militate against the law, and the commandments of God; yea, to be ready to every good work; also faithfully to pay it custom, tax and tribute; thus giving it what is its due. . . . That we are also to pray the Lord earnestly for the government and its welfare, and in behalf of our country, so that we may live under its protection, maintain ourselves, and lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. . . ."

In view of all this, there has been until recent years, a strong tendency among leading spirits of the denomination to discourage any connections with political or governmental affairs. Wayland interprets their attitude quite correctly when he says that the Mennonites, until recent years, have refused any large share in public and political life, because, (1) They desired to avoid show and display. (2) Their religious convictions concerning the oath prevented them. And (3), holding of certain offices might require them to violate their peace principles.*

It is likely that the oath was a great difficulty in participation in State affairs. In the Confession the taking of oath is forbidden. This was an original Anabaptist position and civil magistrates were not admitted into church fellowship. Menno Simon, however, differed with them on this point. He did not refuse membership to magistrates, but admonished them to rule as behooves children of God.†

This position of Menno represents the attitude of a large majority of aggressive Mennonites today who are active in moral and political issues. It is not unusual today to find Mennonites in State Legislatures and other places of governmental responsibility.

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† Menno Simons—Complete Works—p. 22-24

* Wayland—The German Element in The Shenandoah Valley—p. 130

† Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 211

ATTITUDE TOWARD EDUCATION

During the Reformation period the Mennonites had among them their quota of highly educated men. When a few generations had passed, however, and the masses of people had gravitated, because of persecutions, to the less conspicuous sections of the country, leaving the cities and communities of educational advantages, such as there were at the time, and building their homes in rural and mountainous districts, there developed not only a neglect of education but an opposition against it. It must be remembered, however, that there were always individuals among the Mennonites who saw the error in this attitude and who availed themselves of every educational advantage.*

The chief grounds for their opposition to education are evident. The institutions of learning (four hundred years ago) were either under State or Church control. They looked upon schools as State, political or ecclesiastical agencies. Because of the attitude of State and established State Church they had reasons to fear both. Learned men from both State and Church had been the chief enemies of Mennonitism and were instrumental in urging and executing persecutions. The Mennonites naturally concluded that the further away from education, State and the Established Church they could get the better. Higher education appeared to them as full of worldliness, pride, boasting, as well as bigotry and persecution. Theological schools and colleges were discarded. The simple life of the Galilean fishermen was preferred.† They considered that "human learning" did not qualify for the ministry, and they did not allow their children to go to the university, lest they should be injured in their spiritual life.*

As a result of this tendency there came naturally into the denomination an uneducated, and consequently inefficient, leadership; a leadership, which, until recent years, was not only uneducated, but positively opposed to education. There was positive opposition against the establishment of institutions of higher learning within the denomination, and until perhaps fifty years ago, the young men and

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* Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p. 268

† Wickersham—Hist. of Education in Penna.—p. 162

* Barclay—The Inner Life of Religious Societies—p. 84

women desiring a higher education were required to attend other institutions, which a goodly number have always done, which attendance in turn was taken by the leadership to mean that the person was no longer a member of the denomination. Accordingly large numbers of the best persons drifted away from the Church. It is not unusual to find this attitude today among the uneducated leaders.

The present status in the denomination is that of a passing and a rising generation of leadership. The passing has been fearful and suspicious of education and its results. The rising welcomes education most heartily, as well as the results of modern scientific research. The rising generation is breaking away from old group customs and traditions and is using education as one means of freedom and complete development of the individual and the spiritual and social well-being of society.

ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR

Mennonites from the beginning have been opposed to war and the participation therein. Barclay says that "Their principles regard all war and the very passions which lead to war, as forbidden by Christ, and although they would rejoice to heal the wounds occasioned by war, either by hospital nursing, the care and the education of orphans, or the supplying the necessities of the civil State, they object to be made a part of the military system."* Even the promotion of truth, or personal defense, by carnal force, was refused.

Written in the Dort Confession is the following:

> "Regarding revenge, whereby we resist our enemies with the sword, we believe and confess that the Lord Jesus has forbidden his disciples and followers all revenge and resistance, and has thereby commanded them not to 'return evil for evil, not railing for railing;' but to put up the sword into the sheath, or as the prophets foretold, 'beat them into ploughshares.' . . . We are . . . to seek the salvation of ALL men; also if necessity require it, to flee, for the Lord's sake, from one city to another, and suffer the spoiling of goods, rather than give occasion of offense to any one; if we are struck on the right cheek, rather to turn the other also, than avenge ourselves, or return the blow. . . . We are . . . to pray for our enemies, comfort and feed them, when they are hungry and

* Barclay—Inner Life of Religious Societies—p. 618

> thirsty, and thus by well-doing convince them and overcome the evil with good. . . ."

This doctrine implies that "non-resistance" is a positive doctrine, a positive, constructive, method of dealing with an enemy by returning good for evil. It does not imply the suppressing of the fighting instinct, nor the change of human nature. It implies a process of sublimation by which the fighting instinct of man does not find expression through hatred, revenge, destruction and war, but through their "moral equivalent", namely, love and altruistic service. Non-resistance accepts the principles of the solidarity of the human race and the identity of personal interests, and that love means the practice of self-identification with other men in the common well-being of humanity.

Wayland, from the viewpoint of a non-Mennonite, has given a very fair statement of the Mennonite position. He says:*

> "In consequence of their non-resistant principles, the Mennonites have been accused of a lack of patriotism and have at times suffered much in consequence of this and their refusal to bear arms. But they are not lacking in patriotism. They only believe that war is always wrong and debasing. They believe, as a thoughtful writer of history has said, that 'there are few things, if any, more important to steady growth of a free nation than the maintenance of domestic virtues and sanctities of family life.' They believe in helping the State and the nation, but not by means of war and great outstanding armies, but by the useful and productive industries of peace; by earning an honest living, paying just debts, and equitable taxes, by avoiding strife and contention as far as possible, by settling peaceably, man to man, or by additional counsellors, such disputes as inevitably arise; and thus making almshouses, jails, law courts, asylums, many policemen, and the expense of maintaining all of these, largely unnecessary. They would apply the principle of peaceable adjustment of differences upon a large scale, and have nations, as well as individuals, observe the golden rule in business and diplomacy, and settle all disputed points by honest reason and just arbitration before, rather than after, the battle."

Modern Mennonitism believes that war is an unsuccessful method of settling national or international difficulties. It believes that war is brutal, barbarous and inhuman; that its results are negative rather than positive, and that it is an unsuccessful method of securing peace. Mennonitism believes that war must be replaced by a system,

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* Wayland—German Element in The Shenandoah Valley—p. 128f.

whether international law, world court, or something similar, which seeks the common good of all humanity, and which seeks to render welfare to both offended and offender. Mennonitism believes that applied Christianity will end war.

ATTITUDE ON MARRIAGE

The integrity and sanctity of the home has always been an essential item in Mennonite ethics. The family is the basis of society, the State, and the Church. Article XII of the Dort Confession reads as follows:

> "We also confess that there is in the Church of God an honorable state of matrimony between two believers of the different sexes, as God first instituted the same in paradise between Adam and Eve, and as the Lord Jesus reformed it by removing all abuses which had crept into it, and restoring it to its first order. In like manner the Apostle Paul also taught and permitted matrimony in the Church, leaving it to one's own choice to enter into matrimony with any person who would unite with him in such state, providing that it is done in the Lord, according to the primitive order; the words 'in the Lord' to be understood, according to our opinion, that just as the patriarchs had to marry among their own kindred or generation, so there is also no other liberty allowed to believers under the New Testament Dispensation, than to marry amongst the chosen generation, or the spiritual kindred of Christ; that is, to such, and none others, as are already, previous to their marriage, united to the Church in heart and soul, having received the same baptism, belong to the same Church, are of the same faith and doctrine, and lead the same course of life. . . ."

The ethics of marriage may then be summarized about as follows: Marriage is an institution ordained by God, an institution in which one man and one woman are united "in the Lord" for life,* a union dissoluble alone by death. And since marriage is for life it should not be entered thoughtlessly with the view that if the union proves unsatisfactory that it may be dissolved. Husband and wife are under equal obligation to do nothing which might endanger its perpetuity. Conditions may arise where love would demand "separation" for the well-being of all concerned, leaving the parties still husband and wife. Legal "divorce" is never justifiable according to

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* Menno Simons—Complete Works—p. 19.
"In the Lord" was interpreted to mean within the denomination.

Jesus, neither is a remarriage in the case of separation, so long as both parties live; however, upon the death of either, the remaining party is free to remarry.

ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WORLD

By the term "world", as used in this connection, is meant the present "evil" world of men, and their doings generally. The ethical attitude of Mennonitism toward the world finds expression in the doctrine of "Separation from the world.", or the doctrine of "Nonconformity to the world." During the past one hundred years in particular the attitude was expressed in some cases by the adoption of peculiar forms of dress, while in other cases the mark of separation was the German language.

The Dort Confession contains no article on this point, the doctrine being one of more recent development. The social, moral and religious conditions surrounding early Mennonitism led them in the direction of asceticism, or withdrawal from the world. The Scriptural basis for this position is found in such passages as Rom. 12:2, "Be not conformed to this world. . . .", or II Cor. 6:17, "Come out from among them and be ye separate. . . ."; or again, II Cor. 6:14, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. . . ."

The doctrine is founded on a strong dualism. "We must keep in mind two antagonistic spirits: (1) The Spirit of the world, and (2), The Spirit of God."* Those who are controlled by this world are of the devil; those controlled by the spirit of God are the children of God; and the children of God are to have no fellowship with the children of the devil.

As a result of over-emphasis on this point many sections of the denomination drifted into "isolation", or perhaps "insulation". The community was content to move along with its own interests with little concern as to how or where the "world" was going.

It should be said, however, in fairness to a large and rapidly growing group within the denomination, that since the establishment of colleges by the denomination there has come a very great change

* Kauffman—Bible Doctrines—p. 511.

in the matter of "separation"; not that the doctrine has been discarded, but that it is being given a new and vital interpretation. "Separation" is coming to mean and imply the maintenance of identity and the giving of ones self in sacrificial service to the "world", Jesus himself being the ideal example.

CONCERNING THE CHURCH

In the Dort Confession we have the following statement concerning the Church:

> "We believe in and confess a visible Church of God, consisting of those, who . . . have truly repented, and rightly believed; who are rightly baptised, united with God in heaven, and incorporated into the communion of the saints on earth. And these, we confess, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, who have the testimony that they are the bride of Christ; yes, that they are children and heirs of eternal life. . . . This Church of the living God, which He has purchased and redeemed through his own precious blood . . . no winds or floods, yea, not even the gates of hell shall prevail against her, may be known by her evangelical faith, doctrine, love and godly conversation: also by her pure walk and practice. . . ."

The congregational form of Church government has always been basic and fundamental in Mennonitism. Each congregation was independent and exercised its own discipline. Elders were chosen with the unanimous consent of the congregation. There was, however, a tie of mutual love and brotherhood between the different congregations and they sent delegates to their yearly meetings. The yearly meeting could in no way constrain the independent congregation; it could only advise.* This congregational polity was built on the original Anabaptist doctrine.† Only in recent years has there come a strong drift toward the Episcopal system of Church government, namely a government by Bishops. This is an innovation, a departure from the "Faith of our Fathers", and is responsible for much of the present unrest and tendency toward further divisions. The Episcopal system of government may work fairly well in large cities, yet it never can be made to work in a rural constituency among farmers, men who live independently, especially if the people have for four

* Barclay—Inner Life of Religious Societies—p. 87f.
† Dosker—The Dutch Anabaptists—p, 281

hundred years been taught and permitted a congregational polity.

Until more recent years the Mennonites had no bells on their churches, neither did they use musical instruments in worship. The reason for this is evident. During the persecutions they were required to worship in secret or not at all. As a result their places of worship had no towers and no bells, neither musical instruments. They entertained no conscience, nor did they present any Scripture against the use of instruments. In later years, a conscience developed through the pressure of custom and tradition, supposedly on the basis of Scripture, against bells, musical instruments and the like. In more recent years through the influence of Christian education these things have come into use in many sections.

It should be noted that among the various branches of American Mennonites there is a general agreement on the essential Christian doctrines and that their points of difference are invariably in matters which are not essential to Christian living. Their agreements are more significant than their disagreements, and would fully justify union, at least hearty cooperation.

The present status of affairs in the denomination is largely due to the fact that from about 1650 to 1850, a period of two hundred years or more, the Mennonites made very little progress, their religious activities being limited almost entirely to an inner program of severe, if not fatal, discipline. They had no institutions of higher learning, no foreign or home missions, their entire attention being consumed on themselves. The result was a diminishing, rather than an increasing, membership.

It is in view, finally, of these ethical ideals in conjunction with accumulated custom and tradition, and their resulting conditions, that we must interpret recent educational movements within the denomination. The passing leadership entertains fears that with the elimination of wornout customs and traditions the old doctrinal landmarks will also be removed. The rising generation of leadership is interested no less in doctrines but is becoming increasingly interested in men and their salvation. The severe struggles through which Mennonite Colleges have been required to pass in recent years is due in large measure to this fear on the part of a retiring leadership.

PART II

ELEMENTARY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FROM 1683 TO THE PRESENT TIME

CHAPTER IV

EARLY AMERICAN MENNONITE EDUCATION

1. *General Colonial Conditions.* What schools there were among the early American Colonies resembled those of European countries from which the Colonial people came. The people brought with them to America their peculiar religious ideals and traditions to some extent. Those influenced by Calvinistic ideals tended toward universal education, while those dominated by the Anglican ideals tended toward the aristocratic ideals in education.

Three types of schools resulted: (1) The Laissez faire in Virginia; the (2) The Parochial in New Netherlands, and (3), the Governmental in Massachusetts. Pennsylvania and the Mennonites were influenced by the Parochial type, or the Church School, similar to New Netherlands, except that it was carried on in connection with a number of creeds, and that the municipality was seldom a coordinate factor. The Quaker Government of Pennsylvania was more attractive to the early Mennonites and a variety of other German sects, than New York. Pennsylvania had the spirit and atmosphere of tolerance and it was in quest for religious tolerance that Mennonites left Europe originally. Early in the 18th century all Protestant religious bodies were authorized by statute to conduct schools and to receive bequests and hold land for their support.*

2. *Education Until 1776.* Had it not been for the efforts of religious denominations during this period very little evidently would have been done. Wickersham characterises the period as follows: "The Provincial authorities of Pennsylvania . . . . . did next to

* Graves—A Student's History of Education—p. 187f

nothing to promote the cause of general education during the long period from the beginning of the 18th century to the end of their rule in 1776. Charters were granted to a few educational institutions, some laws were passed securing to religious societies the right to hold property for school purposes . . . . but this was all. Penn's broad policy . . . was virtually abandoned. Intellectual darkness would have reigned supreme throughout the Province (Pennsylvania), had not the various Churches and the people themselves been more alive to the importance of the subject than the government."*

EARLY MENNONITE EDUCATION

Mennonite history in America began on October 6th., 1683 at Philadelphia, not taking into account the efforts of Plockhoy. Very early after reaching America they established their schools.

1. *The First Mennonite School.* The first Mennonite educational institution established in America was established in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1702, with Francis Daniel Pastorius as teacher. While this was the first established school, it is evident that the Mennonites conducted elementary educational work for their children from the time they first reached America. It is very likely that both Mennonites and Quakers sent their children to the Germantown school to Pastorius. It was in 1697 that a community Church was built and religious services began, the Mennonites and Friends worshiping together. The Mennonites, however, soon observed that if they were to maintain their identity they must have their own house of worship and their own school. They accordingly, built their first church house in 1708, the building being a log structure, and used also as a school house for many years. It was here that Christopher Dock, as we shall note later, did much of his teaching.

2. *Other Mennonite Schools in Pennsylvania.* It was in 1702 that a settlement of Mennonites was begun at Skippack, Perkiomen Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Over 6,000 acres of land was purchased in that neighborhood by Matthias van Bebber, a wealthy Mennonite, who gave one hundred acres for a Meeting-

* Wickersham—History of Education in Pennsylvania—p. 78.

house. The Meeting-house was erected in 1725, and connected with it was the noted school so long taught by Christopher Dock, "The Pious Schoolmaster of the Skippack".

From 1725 until about 1800 the Mennonites in Pennsylvania conducted elementary schools at various points. Branching out from the settlement at Germantown along the Skippack, they scattered into the adjoining counties, and wherever they went they built churches and established schools. Before 1740 they established a school in Upper Hanover, Montgomery County. And there are records showing that about the same time they erected buildings for church and school purposes in Lehigh County, one between Coopersburg and Center Valley, and the other in upper Milford. The latter was built of logs and divided into two apartments by a swinging partition suspended from the ceiling, the one apartment being used for religious meetings and the other for a school. The Mennonites of Bedminster, Bucks County, built a stone meeting-house in 1776, and opened a school in it. A little later there was a school connected with the Mennonite Church in Schuylkill Township, Chester County. There are upwards of a score of communities, off-shoots probably of the parent community at Germantown and Skippack, through Eastern Pennsylvania. Whether all of these communities supported schools of their own, or whether they joined with their neighbors in the support of a common school, we can not certainly say. It is known, however, that there was a Mennonite School at Saucon, Lehigh County, as early as 1745, and one at Salford, Montgomery County, about as old. There seems to be no doubt that all the children of the several communities learned at least to read and write.

The oldest Mennonite Church in Lancaster County is the one built near Willow Street about 1711. In this building school was taught for many years. The Mellinger's Meeting-house in East Lampeter Township, and the school house that stood near it are very old. In 1792 a building was erected near Oregon, mainly by the Mennonites, and used for both a meeting-mouse and a school house for nearly fifty years. There are also two other buildings in the north-eastern part of Menheim Township prior to 1800 each used for both school and church purposes. Warwick Township had three such combined

meeting-house and school house. There was one in Bracknock Township, near Good's Mill, and one or two buildings of the same kind could be found in every township in Lancaster County, largely settled by Mennonites. The old meeting-house in Derry Township, Dauphin County, was also used as a school.*

Due to the fact that the Mennonites kept no record of their school work it is not possible to give a complete account of what they did during these early colonial days.

3. *Henry Funk.* One of the most able, intelligent and enterprising preachers, and for a long time bishop in what is now Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, was Henry (Heinrich) Funk. He wrote a book on Baptism, entitled, "Ein Spiegel der Täufer", published by Saur in 1744. The book passed through five editions. A more ambitious effort was his "Erklärung einiger Hauptpunkte des Gesetzes," (Restitution, Or An Explanation of Several Principal Points of the Law 1763), published after his death, in 1763.† He and Dielman Kolb supervised the translation of Thielman Van Bragh't's "Märtyrer-Spiegel", (Ephrata, 1748), from the Dutch to the German, and certified to its correctness. Funk was a great-great-grandfather of Bishop John F. Funk of Elkhart, Indiana. He died in 1760. ‡ His contribution to education was not so much in the school room as it was in providing literature which was read by Mennonites for a number of generations.

4. *Attitude Toward Higher Education.* During the Colonial days the Mennonites were evidently carrying out the injunction of Menno Simons when he urged that all children be taught to read and write, to spin and to do other necessary and proper work, suited to their years and persons. There is no record that the Mennonites did anything more in education than elementary work before about the middle of the 19th century. Evidently higher education was not greatly favored in America. In Europe, however, the Mennonites established a college about 1750, which exists to

* Wickersham—History of Education in Pennsylvania—p. 164f

† An original copy in Witmarsum Library

‡ Penna. Magazine of Hist. and Biography—Vol. II, p. 134

this day rather in the form of a Theological Seminary in connection with the University of Amsterdam. In America the Mennonites had no colleges until after the Civil War.

FRANCIS DANIEL PASTORIUS

A history of education among the Mennonites of America would not be complete without definite reference to Francis Daniel Pastorius, neither would it be fair to such an important person to pass him by with brevity.

1. *Early Life.* Pastorius was born in Germany on September 26th, 1651. He was baptised the following day under the sponsorship of the high wellborn Franciscus of Limburg Hereditary Cup-bearer of the Holy Roman Empire and Semper Free, and of the most worthy and erudite Daniel Gering, Doctor of Laws. He started to school at the age of seven. He went to the Latin School, or Gymnasium. He attended four great universities, namely, Altdorf, Strassburg, Basel, and Jena.* He was made Doctor of Laws at Nuremberg in 1676 and was master of the principal ancient and modern languages. †

2. *To Pennsylvania.* In the "Old South Leaflets", number 95, is the following statement: "Francis Daniel Pastorius, the founder of Germantown. . . . was born in 1651 in Franconia, the son of a judge. He was educated in the classics and modern languages and all the sciences of his age, and had entered upon the practice of law, when, having joined the pietists, he consented with his friends to plan for emigration to Pennsylvania. Pastorius had formed the acquaintance of William Penn in England, and became a convert to his doctrines. He and his associates formed the Frankfort Land Company, who, with some merchants from Crefeld, bought thirty or forty thousand acres in Pennsylvania. . . . Until his death, in 1719, he was a man of great influence among the colonists. . . . . Pastorius taught for many years in Germantown and Philadelphia. . . . He was a most prolific writer, upon all sorts

* Learned—Life of Francis Daniel Pastorius—p. 52f

† Wickersham—History of Education in Pennsylvania—p. 161

of subjects, although most of his work remained in manuscript."

In a personal letter to his father, dated June 7th., 1683, Pastorius states why he left his native land. For one reason he says that he might escape the vanities of the Old world and live a quiet Christian life in the wilds of America. He was tired of Europe.

In the Old South Leaflet, noted above, Pastorius gives a description of Pennsylvania, and among other things of interest he says: "The German Society (Frankfort Land Company) commissioned myself, Francis Danial Pastorius, as their licensed agent, to go to Pennsylvania and to superintend the purchase and survey of their lands. I set out from Frankfort on The Mayne, went to London where I made the purchase, and then embarked for America. . . On the 7th day of June, 1683, set sail with a company of eighty persons. On the 16th day of August, 1683, we came in sight of the American Continent. . . The 20th . . . we arrived toward evening at Philadelphia. . . Where we were welcomed with great joy and love by the Governor, William Penn. . . He at once made me his confidential friend. . . . "

3. *Religious Affiliations.* Concerning the religious affiliations of Pastorius there seems to be difference of opinion. John G. Whittier, the Quaker poet, says that "Soon after his arrival (in America) he united himself with the Society of Friends, and he became one of its most able and devoted members, as well as the recognized head and law-giver of the settlement." * Dr. Rufus Jones says that he had been a Mennonite. But he and his friends, after settling in Germantown, were identified with the Friends." † Dr. C. H. Smith says that he was neither a Mennonite nor a Quaker. Dr. Learned says: "Although he associated himself with the Pietists of the Spener circle in Frankfort-on-the-main and was on friendly terms with the Quakerized Mennonites in Crefeld. . . and other places in Germany, there is no positive evidence that he had renounced his allegiance to the Lutheran faith

* Old South Leaflets—No. 95

† Jones—The Quakers in the American Colonies—p. 441

upon his arrival in America. . . He gives no clear statement as to his own sectarian attitude as between Lutherans and Quakers." ‡

In as much as the Mennonites and Quakers worshiped together until 1790, or perhaps later, it seems evident that Pastorius would be closely associated with them; in fact the records of the Friend's Monthly Meetings clearly show that he was. But as to his actual denominational affiliations no positive conclusion has been reached. It is altogether likely that he remained a Lutheran, sympathized strongly with the Mennonites, and leaned heavily toward the Quakers.

4. *The Slavery Protest.* Whittier says that in 1688 Pastorius drew up a memorial against slaveholding, which was adopted by the Germantown Friends, and sent up to the Monthly Meeting, and thence to the Yearly Meeting at Philadelphia. It is noteworthy as the first protest made by a religious body against negro slavery. The original document was discovered in 1844, by the Philadelphia Antiquarian, Nathan Kite, and published in The Friend, Volume XVIII, Number 16. *

Concerning this protest Learned says that there is no direct evidence that Pastorius formulated it. Yet, it is his handwriting. and was signed by himself and others on February 18, 1688. It is entirely possible that Pastorius, having some legal training and experience, was secured by the others to draft the protest, and being in full sympathy with it signed with them.

5. *His Educational Career.* Our present interests in Pastorius are primarily educational. Learned says that he, with others, urged free schools in Philadelphia and that Pastorius himself taught in Philadelphia (1698) in a Friend's School. This school kept eight hours daily except on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. It was Pastorius who first proposed to open a school in Germantown in 1700. The school was opened on January 11th, 1702, nineteen years after his landing. It was to this school that the early Mennonites sent their children. Both boys and girls were admitted

‡ Learned—Life of Francis Daniel Pastorius—p. 218

* Old South Leaflets—No. 95

to the school. Voluntary subscriptions, from two to ten shillings annually, were made by contributors. Those who paid tuition gave from four to six shillings per week. In connection with this day school there was also an evening school for those who were not able to attend during the day. All of this being done without legal compulsion and without distinction of sex, shows how far in advance were the early German settlers in Pennsylvania. English was likely the common language. How long Pastorius continued in Germantown is not stated, likely until about 1718. *

6. *Particular Contributions.* Besides his contributions in the teaching profession, Pastorius also made valuable contributions in his writings. He wrote a great deal. His most important educational work was, "A New Primer—Or Methodical Directions to Attain the True Spelling, Reading and Writing of English, Etc., printed by William Bradford of New York and sold by the author in Pennsylvania. † This book, of which a single copy only seems to be extant was the first original school book printed in Pennsylvania. Besides this he wrote forty-three works on moral, religious, educational subjects. These manuscripts were never published and are not available today; all we have is a catalog of their titles. ‡

Concerning the death of Pastorius we have little, if any, authentic information. The last twenty years of his life he taught school. Quoting Professor Oswald Seidensticker, Whittier says: "No tombstone, not even a record of burial, indicates where his remains have found their last resting place. . . . There is no reason to suppose that he was interred in any other place than the Friend's old burying ground in Germantown. . . " Edwin C. Jellett, of Germantown, under date of Sept. 3, 1908, writes: "There is a tradition in Germantown, that he was buried in the 'Geissler Burying Ground.' This I believe, though I can not prove. . . . The lot is now partially covered by the vestry room of St. Michael's P. E. Church. . . " *

In conclusion it is evident that the early history of the Men-

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* Learned—Life of Francis Daniel Pastorius—p. 166f.

† Ibid. p. 232

‡ Pennypacker—Penna. German Society—Vol. IX, p. 115.

* Learned—Life of Francis Daniel Pastorius—p. 286

nonites in America shows a good degree of interest in elementary education. Had the records been kept, and the facts fully known, it would likely not be difficult to show that the denomination compared very favorably at the time with the more progressive denominations in elementary and practical education. Such men as Pastorius and Dock were very popular in colonial times and evidently most Mennonite schools were patterned after those of Germantown and Skippack.

CHAPTER V

CHRISTOPHER DOCK AND HIS EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Until about thirty years ago the name of Christopher Dock, "The Pious Schoolmaster on The Skippack", was practically unknown in educational circles. During later Colonial times, about the middle of the 18th century, he was known in eastern Pennsylvania as the foremost man in the teaching profession. One reason why we have heard so little about Dock and his methods is due evidently to the fact that he, on religious grounds, avoided anything, especially in publications, which gave publicity either to himself or his work.

It is the present purpose to examine and interpret the educational ideals and methods of the Colonial educator with the view of estimating his educational philosophy, and with the added view of bringing to the attention of students of education the work of a man, who, like Comenius, was hidden too long under the ruins of historic forgetfulness.

The printed sources of our information concerning the philosophy of Dock are limited almost entirely to his "SCHULORDNUNG", or "School Management", in which he sets forth the manner in which children may best be taught in the branches usually given in school, and also how they may be instructed in the knowledge of Godliness. This work was printed by Christopher Saur, in 1770, in Germantown, Pennsylvania, an original copy of which is now in the Schwenkfelder library at Pennsburg.

We have a further source in the "GEISTLICHES MAGAZIN", Numbers 40 and 41, published also by Saur, in which Dock gives two hundred rules of conduct for children. A translation of these rules, as well as a copy of "Schul-Ordnung", may be seen in M. G. Brumbaugh's "Life and Works of Christopher Dock."

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Dock was a native of Germany. The exact date of his birth is not known. He was a product, however, of the 18th century. John Amos Comenius, the Moravian educator preceded him about one hundred years. Des Cartes, the philosopher; John Milton, the poet; and Locke, the champion of truth and reason, lived in the century preceding him. Voltaire, the skeptic, and Rousseau, the man of nature, were among his contemporaries. Basedow, the exponent of Comenius; Pestalozzi, with his reform through universal education; Froebel, with his Kindergarten, and Herbart, with his "unity" and "affinity", followed him.

It was some time between 1710 and 1714 that Dock came to America. He located, as a young man, on a farm near Philadelphia. What his educational qualifications were we do not know. But being of an intellectual and religious turn of mind he was soon influenced by his friends to give himself to the education of the German children of the neighborhood. It was in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, on the Skippack, among the Mennonites, about 1714, that he began his teaching career. Teaching from 1714 to 1735 he returned to the farm until about 1738 when he again took up his teaching. It was in 1738 that he opened two schools, one on the Skippack, and one in Salford. He taught in these schools alternately, three days each. In the present Germantown Mennonite Meeting-house may yet be seen the table and bench used by Dock in his teaching.

Wickersham notes that Dock's skill as a teacher became so widely known that Christopher Saur, the Germantown publisher, and former pupil of Dock, conceived the design of obtaining from him a description of his school work with a view of its publication. * Accordingly, Saur, in 1749, requested Dock to write a treatise on his methods of teaching and school management. It was the purpose of Saur to publish this treatise for the benefit of parents and teachers. But to such publicity the humble spirit of Dock would

* Wickersham—History of Education in Pennsylvania—p. 222

not consent. Saur finally accomplished his purpose in obtaining the treatise through Dielman Kolb, a mutual friend. Kolb submitted to Dock a list of questions for his written answers. Dock finally consented to answer the questions on condition that nothing be published while he lived. The result was that on August 8th, 1750, there appeared the manuscripts of "Schul-Ordnung", which in 1770 resulted in "The oldest work on the art of teaching published in Pennsylvania, or in the United States." † Only two or three of the original copies of this work are extant.

In the "Geistliches Magazin", noted above, appear rules of conduct for children. Section I, in his "One hundred rules of conduct for children", give rules for the conduct of the child in the house of its parents, touching points of conduct during and after rising in the morning, at meals and on retiring at night. Section II, gives rules of conduct for a child at school. Section III, gives rules of conduct for a child on the streets. Section IV, conduct in the meeting of the Church. Section V, general rules.

In his "One Hundred Christian Rules for Children", Section I, he gives rules of conduct toward God. In Section II, rules of conduct toward one's neighbor. Section III, rules of conduct of a child toward himself. All of these rules are ethical and religious in content and must be taken into account in a proper estimate of Dock's philosophy. These rules of conduct constitute the first American book on the subject of etiquette. *

DOCK'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

By the philosophy of education, as used in this connection, is meant the common inquiry as to the meaning and implications of education and the educative process. The philosophy of Dock may be conveniently summarized around four particular principles, namely, (1) Psychological; (2) Pedagogical; (3) Education in Religion and Morals; and (4), his Social Theory.

† Wickersham—History of Education in Pennsylvania—p. 657
Graves—A History of Education in Modern Times—p. 100

* Wickersham—History of Education in Pennsylvania—p. 225

1. *Psychological Principles.* While psychology, as a science in the modern sense, was practically unknown in his day, yet, Dock, in numerous instances, used interesting psychology. His psychology was not perfect; it was crude in many respects. But in his Schul-Ordnung some interesting examples appear in the following connections:

(1) *In His Method of Receiving Pupils.* On the question of how he receives children into school Dock says: "The child is first given a welcome by the other children, who extend their hands to him. Then I ask him if he will be dilligent and obedient. If he promises this, he is told how to behave. . . . " *

Evidently it was Dock's idea to at once have the pupil feel welcome and to be relieved of all unnatural strains and embarrassment, and to come at once into personal contact with himself and others. A comfortable relationship was to be developed from the first, and the pupil was to be fitted immediately into the school community. One thinks of Pestalozzi in this connection.

(2) *Attention and Response.* The creation of a situation and the obtaining of a response was a common practice of Dock. He says:

> "If a child is backward or ignorant, I ask another, or the whole class, and the first one that points out the right letter, I grasp his finger and hold it until I have put a mark opposite his name. . . . Which ever child has during the day received the greatest number of marks. . . . to him I owe something—a flower drawn on paper or a bird. But if several have the same number, we draw lots. . . . In this way not only are the timid cured of their shyness (which is a great hindrance in learning), but a fondness for school is increased." †

It is not difficult in this method of Dock's to observe our modern view of the relation of "response" to "situation". Dock secures in this method four things, namely, attention, interest, desire and action.

(3) *Separate Treatment.* Dock evidently recognized the fact that boys and girls could not be treated successfully en masse. He recognized the age characteristics as being in some degree different

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* Brumbaugh—The Life and Works of Christopher Dock—p. 104

† Ibid. p. 107f.

in boys and girls, and calling for separate treatment. He says concerning the assembling of children at school:

> "Therefore, when a few children are present, those who can read their New Testament sit together on one bench; but the boys and the girls occupy separate benches. . . . Those reading newspapers and letters sit separately, and those doing sums sit separately. . ." *

It would not be fair to say that Dock was modern in the matter of classification of pupils; but it is not too much to say that he recognized a principle which is today emphasized a great deal, namely, proper grading of pupils.

(4) *Individual Treatment.* While mental tests were unknown in his day, yet, Dock knew that children in elementary schools did not progress with equal intellectual rapidity. He knew that pupils could not be treated with uniformity. He says: †

> "Now experience teaches that a timid child is harmed rather than benefited by harsh words and much application of the rod, and to improve it, other means must be employed. Likewise a stupid child is only harmed. A child that is treated to too much flogging at home is not benefited by it at school, but is made still worse. . . . A stubborn child that does not fear to do wrong needs to be sharply punished with the rod, and also earnestly reminded of God's word, in hope of reaching the heart. But the timid and stupid must be reached by other means that make them more free in spirit and more desirous to learn. . . It is preferable to bring the children to do things from a love of doing than to force them by the rod."

While crude in some respects, yet, in this statement may be seen the elements of mental tests and measurements, wise diagnosis of each individual case, and a learning process motivated by the love of doing.

(5) *Apperception.* Dock repeatedly gives expression to this principle. He was not in favor of teaching children formal doctrine which they were not able to understand or assimilate. Concerning the teaching of the Lord's prayer and the ten commandments, he says: *

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* Brumbaugh—The Life and Works of Christopher Dock—pp. 105, 108

† Ibid. p. 122f.

* Ibid. p. 105

> "As much as they can understand of the Lord's prayer and the ten commandments (according to the gift God has given them), I exhort and admonish them accordingly."

Is not this, though crudely stated, our modern principle of teaching by leading from the known to the unknown? Is it not our modern method of producing the desired response by the creation of a productive situation?

(6) *Impression and Expression.* In Schul-Ordnung we have repeated illustrations where Dock made special effort to impress truth, especially religious truth, upon his pupils both by precept and example. His own life, his attitude, his spiritual and religious personality, made deep and lasting impressions upon his pupils. One interesting means of expression was his method of conducting correspondence between the pupils of his two schools. For twelve years he conducted two schools, the one in Skippack, the other in Salford. Under his direction the pupils of these schools carried on a system of letter writing, Dock himself serving as letter carrier. The contents of the letters consisted of short rhyme, or passage of Scripture, or of questions to be answered by a passage of Scripture.

2. *Pedagogical Principles.* It was not Dock's intention to write a book on pedagogics; he was simply answering the questions of his friends, Saur and Kolb. But in his answers he displays some good pedagogical methods.

(1) *Concerning the Force of Ideals.* Dock sees the source of the wickedness of youth in the imaginations of the heart. Unless this impure spring can be rooted out there is little hope of improvement. Corporal punishment can prevent wicked outbursts, but it can not change the stubborn heart. So long as the heart is unchanged or renewed by the Spirit of God there is little of righteousness to be expected.*

In his Rules of conduct he says: †

> "Accustom thy imagination to proper form. Do not imagine the joys of the world lovelier and true Christianity more difficult than they really are. Learn betimes to curb

* Brumbaugh—The Life and Works of Christopher Dock—p. 112

† Ibid. Rules Number, 79, 80, 82, 83, 17, and 18

> thy affections and emotions that they do not enslave thee. Anger, envy and jealousy are tormentors of the soul. Beware of their power. Let no rank or improper lusts arise in thy heart, for they destroy body and soul. Impress deeply upon thy heart the divine qualities taught in the Scriptures. God is a spirit, serve Him in spirit and in truth, and seek to unify His spirit and thine through faith and love."

Is not the efficiency and effectiveness of an inner, vital and dynamic ideal, rather than the application of outward force, which Dock here advocates, precisely what our best educators today are urging upon us?

(2) *Concerning Discipline.* In extreme cases, corporal punishment, according to Dock, was the only effective course to pursue in the prevention of wicked outbursts, but it was no means of changing a bad heart. The discipline of Dock aimed to go deeper and to remove evil propensities by the roots.

One of his methods of discipline was that of creating pride in each pupil. If a pupil fails unnecessarily he is called "lazy" by the entire class and his name is written down. Whether the child fear the rod or not, says Dock, this method hurts more than the use of the rod. ‡ When a pupil who has been called lazy redeems himself he is then called "diligent" and his name erased and the past forgotten.

(3) *Concerning Rewards.* When an entering pupil reached a certain stage in his education; "When he can say his A B C's and point out each letter with his index finger. . . . his father owes him a penny, and his mother must fry him two eggs for his diligence, and the same reward is due him for each advance. . " * This is but one illustration of Dock's method in the matter of rewards. His rewards were never great, but generally of a nature that would appeal to the average boy or girl, and they were given not so much as a compliment on past success as a stimulant to future effort.

(4) *Concerning Recreation.* The problem of recreation in colonial days was not the same as today. That was a day of hand labor; this a day of machines. That was the day of the ox-cart;

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‡ Brumbaugh—The Life and Works of Christopher Dock—p. 106
* Ibid. p. 104

this the day of motor cars. Dock placed little, if any, emphasis on physical education other than that of ordinary day labor. In Schul-Ordnung he says: †

> "As the children carry their dinner, an hour's liberty is given them after dinner. But as they are usually inclined to misapply their time if one is not constantly with them, one or two of them must read a story of the Old Testament, which I write copies for them. This exercise continues through the noon hour."

The social and economic conditions of his day were of such a nature that physical education was not greatly in demand. Practically all of Dock's pupils were either from the farm or had been taught to work.

3. *Education in Religion and Morals.* Dock, Comenius and Erasmus were quite in agreement in matters of religion and morals. The three held that learning, morality, religion, and good manners must develop together; that education should start in infancy with the mother. Dock placed special emphasis on moral and ethical qualities. Education in religion and morals was basic.

(1) *The Place of The Bible.* In the matter of teaching the Catechism or the Bible Dock says: *

> "I may say that in my experience in this country I have had, at my school, children of various denominations, so that I could not teach them the same catechism. Nor have I such a catechism included, but when the children have learned to read well, the parents at home have to teach them the catechism themselves. . . Besides this, it has been my aim to make them familiar with the New Testament from the exercises of finding chapters. This has been quite successful, so that when a passage was mentioned, they turn to it and read it without being prompted."

Dock then proceeds to teach and illustrate the great principles of faith and faithlessness, justice and injustice, chastity and unchastity, humility and vanity. When each virtue has been explained by him he asks his pupils to find passages in Scripture illustrating the virtues. This is done, he says, †

> "In order to have them find all the rare Bible gems which express these qualities. It also becomes evident that the

† Brumbaugh—The Life and Works of Christopher Dock—p. 109

* Ibid. p. 132

† Ibid. p. 133

> more passages are found dealing with a certain quality, the more clearly does the truth of the same appear. In this way one passage of scripture serves not only to fix another one in memory, but also to elucidate and explain it. After the references have all been read, the children are asked several questions, which are easily answered from such references. . . . "

For Dock there is no real education without religion; and there is no real and vital religion without education. The two are so closely united that they can not be separated without doing violence to both. The Bible was one of Dock's chief text-books.

(2) *Ethics.* The ethical note in the philosophy of Dock is very strong. In his One Hundred Christian Rules for Children, thirty-six have to do with one's relation and conduct toward God; twenty-eight with conduct toward one's neighbor; and thirty-six with one's relation and conduct toward self. Concerning God, who is eternal, holy, just, wise and omniscient, one should unite their spirit with Him, be cleansed by faith and ruled by His spirit. Concerning one's neighbor, whether friend or foe, love should be extended, the golden rule observed, evil should not be returned for evil, nor insult for insult, and no opportunity for doing good should be missed. Concerning one's self he says: *

> "Thy immortal soul is the noblest part of thy being, therefore thou must take more care of it than thy mortal body. The nobility of thy soul consists in its union with God. . . . Anger, envy and jealousy are tormentors of the soul. . . Be therefore careful, and do not expose thyself to dangers that menace body and health. . . . Remember thou shalt not always live in this world, and prepare betimes for thy departure. . . . Fear not death, for if thou has lived a Christian life, thou canst die blessed and happy."

It should be said in this connection that Dock was thoroughly evangelistic in his attitude. There were adult sinners who needed repentance and regeneration. † His main emphasis, however, was on Christian nurture and the gradual growth into Christian manhood and womanhood. He would sympathize more with Horace Bushnell than with the modern sensational evangelist.

(3) *Moral Evils and How to Meet Them.* It is evident from

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* Brumbaugh—The Life and Works of Christopher Dock—p. 214f.

† Ibid. p. 197

Schul-Ordnung that Dock made particular study of several of the leading juvenile sins common in his day, namely, profanity, lying, stealing, and fighting, with a view of counteracting them.

In the matter of profanity Dock would diagnose his cases seeking the cause. He found most frequently that profanity was due to the fact that children were ignorant of what they were saying. Lying, he found, to be the result of fear. When a pupil did wrong, fearing lest he would be punished, he would attempt concealment through lying. Stealing was the natural result of covetousness. Greed for honor led to quarrels. In every case Dock made an effort to enlist the responsibilities and cooperation of parents in overcoming the evils. He always pointed out the moral significance of the evils, and, if after due and proper correction, the pupil continued the evil, proper and due punishment was administered.

4. *Dock's Social Theory.* The social mind of Dock had not advanced as far as that of modern social thinkers, but it moved in the same direction and along the same basic lines. The common good of the people, here and now, regardless of wealth or poverty, was his supreme concern. In Schul-Ordnung he says: *

> "I also saw the degenerated condition of youth, and the many wrongs of this world by which adults spoiled and distressed youth. . . And I saw . . . the unequal ability of parents in training their children. . . . They teach their children evil by their own example. . . . The poor beggar child, scurfy, ragged and lousy, if otherwise it have a good disposition and willingness to learn, should be as dear to him though he never receives a penny for it in the world, as the child of wealth. . . . It should be the supreme desire of every one to promote the glory of God and the common good, for this can make us happy here and in eternity."

Before concluding our study of Dock a word should be said concerning the source of his philosophy. While this likely will remain more or less a speculative matter, yet we may fairly conclude that he was not a great admirer of Voltaire, neither a faithful exponent of Rousseau. A study of Schul-Ordnung leads one to think that he was a great admirer of Comenius and was likely a close student of The Great Didactic. In spirit and religious attitude these two men have much in common.

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* Brumbaugh—The Life and Works of Christopher Dock—pp. 103, 101.

We may also fairly conclude that while Dock was not primarily interested in scientific pedagogy, yet he did work along basic lines; he did follow psychological laws in bringing childhood to maturity. His philosophy of education, though crude in some respects, did represent the pupil-centric type of thinking and method. The aim of education for him was the development of the innate powers, potentialities and capacities of the pupil toward a definite social goal, namely, a full and complete Christian personality in the Kingdom of God; a socially adjusted individual, one with right relations with God, fellowmen and himself.

Among the permanent contributions of Dock to educational theory and practice was his positive emphasis on free, undogmatic, non-ecclesiastical religious and moral education. Besides this he added dignity to the teaching profession. Competent teachers were rare in those days. Equipment was poor and unattractive to young men of energy and ability. Teachers salaries were poor and uncertain. The profession had a poor social standing. But with Dock's attractive and successful methods dignity was added to the profession and the succeeding years found the profession more earnestly sought by stronger men.

It was Dock's custom each evening after the pupils had gone from school to remain in the school room and pray. He would, upon his knees, name each pupil before God and ask that he might be guided in doing the best for each one. One evening in the autumn of 1771 he failed to come home as usual. When a search was made he was found in the school room on his knees, dead. Thus ended the earthly career of one greatly admired and loved in his day; one who is destined to be more and more appreciated by each succeeding generation.

CHAPTER VI

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
(Old Conference)

INTRODUCTION

As previously noted it is most difficult, in fact impossible, to write a complete and accurate history of the religious and educational movements among the Mennonites, due to the fact that until recent years no careful records have been kept by the denomination. It is the purpose of the author, in view of this condition, to present only such material and conclusions as the facts and evidence in hand will warrant.

One thing is very evident, as well as characteristic of the Mennonites, namely, that they have always taken their religion seriously, a personal knowledge of the Bible by each individual being positively urged. Every Mennonite family accepted as a duty the obligation of teaching their children the Christian religion and the ways of the Lord. This task they have never been willing to entrust to any one outside of the denomination.

While the Sunday School is of comparatively recent origin within the denomination, yet it must always be kept in mind that Mennonites have never been without some form of religious instruction for the young. Early upon their arrival in America ways and means were provided for religious and Biblical instruction for their children. The elementary schools which they conducted during the Colonial period always emphasized religion and religious education. Wayland makes the statement that "Forty years before (1740) Robert Raikes started his noted Sunday School movement, the Mennonites had a school near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania where their children received instruction in the three 'R's' during the week and in the Bible on Sunday."* What Wayland notes in this connection is but one illustration of

* Wayland—The German Element In The Shanandoah Valley—p, 120.

what was done by the Mennonites at a score or more of places in Pennsylvania during Colonial days and before the coming of the public schools.

There are some sixteen or seventeen branches, or varieties of Mennonites in America, all of which came from the same original body, either directly or indirectly. The main line of this original body is today known as the "Old Mennonites", in some places called the "American Mennonites". During the past twenty-five or thirty years the Old Mennonites include in their bi-annual General Conference, Mission Board, Publication Board, and Educational Board, a progressive wing of the "Amish" Mennonites, the Amish being a conservative off-shoot from the main body in Europe about 1693.

At the present time the Old Mennonites represent the largest single group in America and represent the main line back to the days of the Anabaptists. This Conference has always been more conservative on new departures than have the Conferences of more recent origin. In fact her hesitancy in adopting more progressive and effective methods and attitudes furnished the occasion for most of the more recent off-shoots resulting in the smaller branches. The desire for Sunday Schools, prayer meetings, evangelistic meetings, education and more progressive religious activities is what led groups at different times to move out of the Old Conference and to organize themselves into new and more aggressive bodies. At the present time the Old Conference is more conservative, less progressive, than many of her off-spring Conferences. Parents usually are more conservative and less progressive than their children.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION FROM 1775 TO 1850

This particular period is something of a problem. It is to be hoped that some future historian may unearth historical material of this period which is today unavailable. It is nearly impossible to know the details during these years. One thing seems most evident, namely, that during these seventy-five years the Old Church was exercising most severe discipline with no vital or progressive program in execution. In view of the developments about 1850 one must believe that the period in question was one of religious formalism and rigid

and unwise discipline through which large groups of people were lost to the denomination.

On the other hand it seems evident that opportunities for religious and Biblical instruction during these years were not wholly lacking. While no great names or leaders appear during this time, yet it would be unreasonable to suppose that religious instruction died out with Christopher Dock. It is reasonable to suppose that the influence of a man like Dock would be felt during this period. Men like Abram Hunsicker and his son Henry, in the building of Freeland Seminary in 1848, were products of the Dock type of mind. Then followed a few men like John F. Funk and John H. Oberholtzer during and following the Civil War. From this point to date we may be reasonably certain of the leading movements and events.

The evidence thus far in hand will warrant the belief that from 1775 to 1850, before the introduction of the Public School System in Pennsylvania, the Mennonites continued the work of religious instruction in connection with their elementary schools, a decided change coming, however, with the introduction of the Public School. It is further evident that the Old Mennonite Conference had few, if any, permanent Sunday Schools before the Civil War. There were attempts made before the war, but likely none of them, because of opposition, carried over the war. It is further evident that the war served as an awakening in as much as immediately following the Sunday School movement was effectively begun.

RELIGIOUS TEACHING FROM 1850 TO 1867

The years from 1850 to 1867 were years of awakening. Certain individuals, men of religious conviction, were making themselves felt. Freeland Seminary was bearing fruit. The religious instruction of the period was due in a large measure to certain personalities. In the Old Conference there is one outstanding man, who, more than any other, was responsible for the creation of sentiment and the organization of Sunday Schools, namely, John F. Funk.

Funk was born in 1835 in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania and at this writing is still living and active. From his childhood he

attended Sunday School in other denominations in his neighborhood, there being no regular Sunday Schools at the time in the Mennonite denomination. He was also a student in Freeland Seminary in his youthful days. In about 1857 he went to Chicago where he made the personal acquaintance of D. L. Moody, who was just two years younger. In 1857-'58 there was a great revival in Chicago during which time many young people came into the Churches. In the Spring of 1858 the Chicago Young Men's Christian Association was organized, Funk being among its first members. In the year 1857-'58 he attended the Bell and Sloan Business College and graduated with honors. On the last Sunday in May, 1865, he was ordained to the ministry. It was in 1864, while in Chicago, that he begun the publication of the "Herald of Truth", a monthly religious paper, "Devoted to the interests of the Denomination of Christians known as 'The Mennonites'." It was in the columns of this paper that Funk frequently urged upon parents the duty of teaching and training their children in the sacred scriptures.

1. *Home Education.* Some conception of the religious educational ideals of the Old Mennonites near the time when the Sunday School came into the denomination may be gotten from a series of "Rules for Home Education" which Funk published in his paper in 1866. They are as follows:*

> "From your children's earliest infancy inculcate the necessity of instant obedience. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children always understand that you mean what you say. Never promise them unless you are quite sure that you can give them what you say. If you tell a little child to do something, show him how to do it, and see that it is done. Always punish your children for wilful disobedience, but never punish them in anger. Never let them perceive that they vex you or make you lose your command. If they give way to petulence or ill-temper, wait till they are calm, and then gently reason with them on the impropriety of their conduct. Remember a little present punishment when the occasion arises, is much more effectual than the threatening of a greater punishment should the fault be renewed. Never give your children anything because they cry for it. Teach them that the only way to appear good is to be good. Accustom them to make their little recitals with perfect truth. Never allow of tale-bearing. Teach them self-denial, not self-indulgence, of an angry and resentful spirit."

* Herald of Truth—August, 1866

It was the frequent appearance of such articles in the publication mentioned which finally prepared the soil out of which the Sunday School finally grew in the Old Mennonite Church.

2. *Printed Bible Lessons.* It was in January, 1867, that Funk began a series of printed Bible Lessons through the Herald of Truth. The lessons, four each month, appeared until September of the same year, covering thirty-two points of Christian doctrine, such as, God, Creation, Angels, Man, Sin, Redemption, Law, Faith, Repentance, Etc. The purpose was to furnish religious instruction for the young and was arranged in the form of questions and answers. In the first issue of four lessons the editor says:*

> "The following four lessons are intended, one for every Sunday in the month of January, and it is intended . . . to continue these lessons in each number . . one for each Sunday . . . the lessons to embrace a course of instruction in christian doctrine, through which those who study them may be established in the faith and practice of the Church of Christ and His Apostles. . . . We hope all parents will see the necessity of this, and endeavor to have their children to learn them. A very good way, and one which we would recommend is to have the children commit the lessons during the week, and, on Sunday, let the parents take an hour, and sit down with them, and have them repeat it. . . . ."

While these lessons continued only until September of that year it was again a long step in the direction of the organized and permanent Sunday School.

3. *Education Encouraged.* It is interesting to note the evolution of sentiment in favor of more Biblical education as a result of the articles appearing in the Herald. Particular individuals in different sections of the Church began to realize the need of systematic religious training for the young. It was in October, 1867, that an interesting article appeared encouraging education. Among the various subjects treated in the article were the following: True Knowledge Required and Encouraged; The Sin and Danger of Ignorance; The Benefit of Knowledge; True Knowledge essential to True Love; The Certain Knowledge of Divine Truth; How Can Knowledge and Wisdom be Attained? The interesting thing about the article is that it is a recital of scripture passages only, each subject being treated

* Herald of Truth—January, 1867.

in words of Scripture exclusively. The article indicates that the whole Bible is in favor of education; which of course, is not untrue.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Every forward move in the Mennonite Church has been the result of hard labor, against many odds, on the part of a few individuals. The birth of the Sunday School was not without the earnest, courageous and sacrificial service of a few men of conviction.

1. *Opposition.* Definite and available evidence warrants the statement that the Old Conference not only had no approved Sunday Schools before the year 1867, but that it actively and aggressively, and by conference action, opposed Sunday Schools. Resolutions and decisions are on record for the year 1867 making it a serious offense for any member of the Church to take part in the organization or conducting of a Sunday School. The offense was so serious that one violating Conference rulings was subject to discipline and even excommunication. The Sunday School was a ravenous "wolf in the camp" and was testified against in every conference and the members were warned not to have any part in it, as it certainly would lead into worldliness and worldly conformity.* About this same year (1867) Funk received a letter from a man in Virginia giving thirty-three "Scriptural" reasons why they should not have and could not tolerate Sunday Schools in the Church. Mennonite Sunday Schools, as most other vital and aggressive institutions, have been born in a manger; there was no room in the inn; they were born outside of the Church and later adopted by the Church.

2. *First Favorable Conference Action.* For a number of years previous to 1867, in certain sections of the Old Church, many young people began to leave the Church and to join with other denominations in which there were Sunday Schools. This fact led some of the leaders of the Church to see the need of the Sunday School. It was at the "Martins Church", near Orrville, Ohio, that one of the Conferences finally, and for the first time, granted the privilege of organizing

* Funk—Personal Interview.

Sunday Schools, and then only in such sections of the country where the young people were being lost to the denomination. But the conference was not unanimous and there was still strong opposition. But a strong plea was made by an old Bishop from Masontown, Pennsylvania† in which he said that in as much as they were a small congregation in the midst of other strong denominations, all of whom had Sunday Schools, the Mennonite children were induced to attend these outside Schools, and were thereby being led away from the mother Church. It was this argument which won the Conference decision in favor of granting Sunday Schools wherever similar conditions prevailed. The action of Conference was a new departure and was seriously criticized by other sections of the Church.

The Orrville Conference (1867) passed two resolutions: (1) "Evening meetings, on account of the disorder which frequently prevails at them, should be avoided, except by ministers traveling, or where, on account of sickness or old age, persons are prevented from attending the usual services during the day. (2) Sunday School, when conducted in accordance with the teaching of the Bible, and kept free from the vain and corrupting customs now so prevalent in many places, may be maintained."*

Though this was the first official permission in the Old Church to conduct Sunday School work, yet, it should be remembered that there were a few schools before this time, schools organized and conducted regardless of Conference rulings. It has been the salvation of the Old Church that in every generation there have been men of conviction, men who worked regardless of opposition.

3. *The First Sunday School.* It is frequently reported that the first Mennonite Sunday School in America was organized at Bertolet's Mennonite Meeting-house, Fredrick, Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1848, with George S. Nice as superintendent. This school, however, after a few years ceased to exist for lack of support, and further, it can hardly be called a "Mennonite" Sunday School as it was organized and conducted by others than Mennonites. Nice himself was not a Mennonite.

† Bishop Johnson.
* Herald of Truth—May 12th, 1867.

The fact of the matter is nobody knows when, where or by whom the first Mennonite Sunday School was conducted in America. The earliest school with documentary evidence is the one which was organized in the "Lincoln Church", Vineland, Ontario, Canada. Abram Eby, writing in "Der Mennonitische Friedensbote", May 15, 1872, says:*

> "In the year 1848 the preachers Dilman Moyer and Jacob Gross decided to open a Sunday School in one of the congregations in Lincoln. They decided so without first obtaining the consent of Daniel Hoch (High), who, however, had no objections to offer against it. Everything seemed to move along smoothly for a time until Satan discovered a means in the Sunday School to destroy his kingdom, and he therefore concluded to destroy it . . . ."

Evidently this school was in running order for a time; how long Eby does not say. He does go on giving account of the work and purpose of the school and the division which resulted in the Churches in Ontario, the Sunday School being one of the causes.

Relative to the first permanent Sunday School in the Old Conference, Bishop David Plank, Logan County, Ohio, in a document written in 1898 on the subject of "Origin and Growth of Our Sunday School", says: †

> "I have here a few words of Sunday School history taken from a memorandum book in my possession which I value very highly. It reads as follows: Logan County, Ohio, May 31st, 1863. Jacob C. Kenagy and David Plank, ministers of the Amish Mennonite Church in this locality have decided by council of the Church to organize a Sunday School in the name of God the Father. We are confident that with the cooperation of the fathers and mothers much good will result from this new departure. . . . . But this first Amish Mennonite Sunday School had no secretary. . . . I realize now for the want of this officer much historical and statistical matter pertaining to the Sunday School in its infancy is lost. . . . A year ago (1897) when I was in Pennsylvania, sister Zook, wife of J. R. Zook showed me a beautiful certificate of mem-

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* Note. Following are the exact words of Eby: "Im Jahr 1848 beschlossen die Prediger Jacob Grosz und Dilman Moyer eine Sonntagschule in einer der Gemeinden in Lincoln zu eröffnen. Dies geschah, ohne den Prediger Daniel Hoch, der aber nichts dagegen einzuwenden hatte, um seine Beistimmung zu fragen. Alles schien eine Zeitlang gut zu gehen bis der Satanas in der Sonntagschule ein Mittel zur Zerstörung seines Reiches entdeckte, und sich deszhalb entschlosz, sie zu zerstören."

† Plank's original document in my private library.

> bership of our Sunday School of 1864. It was endorsed by David M. Yoder, Superintendent, and David Plank assistant . . . . This first Sunday School differed from our present school in two things at least. 1st., In less than one month from starting we had a library. . . . We started with eighty-nine books at a cost of $16.70. More were added as we went on. The expenses for the first year were $20.13; for the second year, $12.19. 2nd, We had no drones or idlers. . . . We had no penny collections, but we got the money when we needed it. . . . ."

Plank then proceeds to give the names of twelve persons who gave each $1.00; the five persons who gave 50c each; then fourteen names of persons who gave 25c each. He tells of the opposition to the Sunday School, the difficulties which arose, and the final victory for the school. This Sunday School Plank claims was the first in the Old Conference with a continued existence and it is altogether likely that he is right, in so far at least, as documentary evidence is available.

4. *Sunday Schools Allowed in Indiana.* In 1871 the Indiana Mennonite Conference (District) passed the following resolution: "Resolved, that Sunday Schools are considered good and shall be allowed when they are conducted in Christian order, and the New Testament shall be used."* In the same district conference of 1873 the following decision was made: "If Sunday Schools are maintained according to the rules and customs of our Church it was thought that no objection could be raised."† In Indiana, as in practically every other State, Sunday Schools were strongly opposed. But when it became evident that Sunday Schools were not only coming but were actually there, then the Conference "allowed" them, but gave very little encouragement.

Concerning the place and date of the first Sunday School in Indiana among the Mennonites we are again on uncertain grounds. Bishop Jonathan Kurtz writes that the first School was organized in the Maple Grove Meeting-house, near Topeka, with George Boller as superintendent.‡ Kurtz does not know the date. According to

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* Indiana Conference Minutes—1871

† Ibid. 1873, pp. 35 and 156.

‡ Kurtz—Personal Letter—Nov. 11th, 1923

J. F. Funk, in an article written in 1918,† the first Sunday School in Indiana was organized at the Yellowcreek Church near Goshen sometime between 1867 and 1869, with William Holdeman as superintendent. This school was conducted at first in the German language and continued only from spring until fall, closing for the winter months. About the same time, says Funk, a Sunday School was organized under his direction at the "Shaum" Church, now the Olive Church, south and west of Elkhart. Neither of these schools were approved by Conference, simply tolerated.

It really took twenty years to get the Sunday School started in Indiana. All the teachers had to be made. Practically all of the Bishops were against the School. Funk, with a few others like John S. Coffman encouraged it. The case of the Sunday School was the same as that of every worthy enterprise in the Old Church, certain men with conviction moved fearlessly ahead regardless of opposition until finally the Bishops with Conference approved. It is a peculiar thing, yet true, that few movements, if any, which meant progress and aggressive action were ever started among the Bishops, but rather among the laymen.

5. *In Ohio.* Evidently the first Sunday School in Ohio was the one mentioned above in connection with Bishop David Plank. The organization of the first Sunday School in Allen County, Ohio is given in the words of an eye-witness:*

> "On Sunday the 16th, (August, 1868), according to previous appointment, we met at the Mennonite Meeting-house at this place (near Lima), for the purpose of organizing a German Sunday School. The meeting was well attended by both old and young, and all manifested a great deal of interest in the school. Many of the young people seemed very anxious to obtain a more perfect knowledge of the German language. . . . . After singing several hymns, prayer and a short address, in which the object, importance and necessity of a Sunday School, not only for the purpose of instructing the children in the language, but more especially for the purpose of instructing them in the truths of the Bible, and pointing them to Jesus, the Savior of mankind, were set forth, the school was organized into classes, and a teacher appointed for each class. Half an hour was given to the lesson, during which

† Article—In Funk private library.

* Herald of Truth—Sept., 1868

> each teacher gave such instruction to his or her class as appeared appropriate and necessary. After the lesson was ended the school was closed by prayer and singing. . . ."

In 1869 there was a Sunday School near Bluffton, evidently in the Zion congregation. The reporter says that the children spell and read the German language, and that they were also asked questions on Scripture.* Record is also made that the brethren in Mahoning County, Ohio, in 1874 had organized a Sunday School.† In October of the same year it was reported that the school was well attended with one hundred and fifty pupils with great interest.‡

In the January (1875) issue of the Herald of Truth appears an account of a Sunday School in Logan County, Ohio. The report reads:

> "The Sunday School was commenced in the Spring (evidently 1874), under the blessing of God, and conducted by Joseph Hartzler as superintendent, and Christian K. Yoder as assistant, and Levy King as secretary. The number of scholars range from sixty-five to ninety-five. Good order prevailed throughout and 4,773 verses were committed to memory during the season of the school, and between $15.00 and $20.00 were contributed to its support by the scholars. Nine Bibles were obtained by different scholars, besides a number of Testaments and other books."

In the July, 1875, issue of the Herald of Truth appears a note on a Sunday School in Holmes County, Ohio. "A Sunday School was organized recently by the Walnutcreek Church . . . which was attended by a great number of children, likewise by brothers and sisters of maturer age." There likely were other schools organized in other parts of the State about this same time if records were available.

6. *In Virginia.* In an historical sketch of the Bank Church, Rockingham County, Virginia, Jacob A. Heatwole says:*

> "In the year 1870 the house was enlarged about a third. . . The same year a Sunday School was organized and successfully conducted for two years. An English library consisting of premiums for the children, booklets and stories suitable for the young, and Testaments, were purchased, forty-two copies

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* Herald of Truth—September, 1869

† Ibid. July, 1874

‡ Ibid. October, 1874

* Mennonite Year Book and Directory—1907, p. 28

> of which still remain (1907). The opposition to Sunday Schools in a few years became so great that the work was dropped. Eleven years passed before another effort was made to take up the important work. This time (1882) the library was improved by purchasing a number of question books and New Testaments. . . . ."

Much credit is also given to Dr. G. W. McFarlan and A. G. Simmers in keeping the new institution alive. McFarlan came from the Methodist Church uniting with the Mennonite, and Simmers from the Dunkard.

An uncertainty arises again concerning the place of the first Sunday School in Virginia. In reply to a questionnaire (1923) Bishop L. J. Heatwole says that the first Sunday School in their State was organized in the spring of 1870 at the Weaver's Church, Rockingham County, near Harrisonburg, with Emanuel Suter as superintendent and associated with him were Peter Blosser, D. A. Heatwole, and Bishop Samuel Coffman. Heatwole reports further (1923) that there are twenty-one Mennonite Sunday Schools in the State, 90% being rural and 10% in the city. There is an enrollment of 1,425, 75% being children and 25% adults. Both uniform and graded lessons are used, and the English language only.

7. *In Pennsylvania.* Pennsylvania is the cradle of American Mennonitism. Pennsylvania is conservative and the West has more or less lost caste because of its progressiveness. Sunday Schools began later in Pennsylvania than in Indiana and Ohio. The eastern Bishops were opposed and ruled against the coming of the Sunday School, largely on the grounds that they had no books only such as were gotten from the outside and this was condemned. It was at this time that Amos Herr, a good and active speaker, wrote to J. F. Funk asking for assistance in getting books for the Sunday School. Herr and Funk then secured Bishop J. N. Brubaker, after which Brubaker and Funk, staying with Herr for one week, got out three books, very small certainly, for Sunday School use.

The first of these books was a primary question book for young classes up to ten years of age. The second was for intermediate classes from ten to twelve years of age. It was a question book on the New Testament in English and German. The third book was a

Bible class question book on the entire Bible, English and German. Lancaster County, Pennsylvania began the use of these books and the Sunday School made quite rapid progress, these books being used until the coming of the Lesson Quarterlies about 1890. H. B. Brenneman, Elkhart, Indiana was the first editor of the Mennonite Sunday School Lesson Quarterly, with John S. Coffman second.*

In the July (1874) issue of the Herald of Truth appears the following:

> "The brethren in the Franconia Church, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania have organized a German School which meets every Saturday afternoon, in the Meeting-house and is conducted much the same as a Sunday School. The ministers, laymen, and children meet together to read, sing and pray. A similar school was conducted at Bergy's school house in the same township, but on Sunday afternoon."

A further note appears in the Herald of Truth in the July, 1875, issue:

> "The brethren . . . . have again opened their school. The school has been maintained for several summers and is held on Saturday afternoon, though it is conducted in the same manner as a Sunday School. The attendance is very large. . . . . The aged minister, Henry Nice, assists in conducting it. . . . . There are others of our Church in Montgomery County who entertain the idea of organizing similar schools. . . . ."

In the July, 1877, issue of the Herald of Truth appears a note concerning the Sunday School in Bucks County, the following being a summary: In the Gehman Church some felt the need of a Sunday School. They put the question before the Church whether or no they may organize. The congregation voted favorable. They then proceeded to organize a German Sunday School on April 22d, 1877. Between seventy-five and eighty children and young people were present and active. The school was conducted under the care of the Church and held on Sunday afternoon, being conducted in much the same way as at other places. Two ministers and a layman were appointed to conduct the work, with four others to assist. The young people were given instruction in the German language. The school soon reached over one hundred in attendance.

* Funk—In Personal Interview.

Evidently many other parts of the State organized Sunday Schools at about the same time and in much the same way. The available evidence permits one to believe that when the movement was once started that it spread quite rapidly.

8. *In Illinois.* Weber presents the following findings:*

> "About this time (1882), perhaps a year earlier, the Sunday School was started. Several women, Mrs. Jacob Reitzel, Mrs. Abraham Ebersole, and Mrs. Jacob Ebersole, advocated and urged it. E. M. Shellenberger from Freeport where a Sunday School had been started a few years before was invited to come and organize one at Sterling. Since there was so much opposition it had to be started outside of the Church. The School was conducted in the East Science Ridge schoolhouse, then newly built for somewhat over a year. The first superintendent was Phillip Nice. . . . At first it was held every Sunday afternoon until it was tolerated in the Church house. . . . ."

Evidently, however, the Sterling Sunday School was not the first in the State. J. F. Funk made a visit in October or November, 1867 to the Church near Washington, Illinois (likely now the Union Church), and reported as follows: There was a Sunday School organized there during the summer and a session was held at 9:00 A.M. on Sunday; that the School was closed on November 25th, because of the winter and the members living so far away. He states that the purpose of the School was to instruct the children and youth in the truths of the Bible, in their duties toward God and men, and to lead them in wisdoms ways.† In a personal letter from Funk dated January 25th, 1924, he confirms the report. It is evidently true that following the year 1867 Sunday Schools developed more or less gradually in all of the Mennonite communities in the State.

At the present time there are sixteen Sunday Schools in the State, about 87½% rural and the rest city. The international uniform lessons are used with the exception of one school where the beginners, the primaries and juniors use the graded lessons. There are still a few German classes in some sections.‡

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* Weber—History of American Mennonites in Illinois—p. 47f.

† Funk—Herald of Truth—Jan., 1867

‡ Eash—Questionnaire Report—1923

ORGANIZATION AND METHODS

The organization was usually very simple, with perhaps a superintendent, assistant superintendent, sometimes a secretary and treasurer.

1. *Method of Conducting.* Practically the same method of conducting the School prevailed throughout the denomination. The School in Allen County, Ohio gives us a very good example of the way in which the average School was conducted. They report as follows:*

> "First, we sing, generally such hymns as are appropriate for children and youth. Then we read a chapter, or part of a chapter, from the Bible . . . generally some suitable remarks are made. . . . Then prayer is offered. After this the school is divided into classes. . . . The little boys and girls have the small Primers,† the larger scholars have the larger Primers or the spelling books. Others that can read pretty well also use the New Testament. The teachers are brethren for the male, and mostly sisters for female classes. . . . Half or three quarters of an hour, and sometimes perhaps more, is spent with the lesson. . . . We endeavor to instruct the children in such a manner as their young minds may be able to understand. Sometimes also a short exhortation is given to them. Then we pray and sing again and close the school. The leaders of the school have thus far been one of the ministers or deacons. Sometimes they are all there and help one another."

Following this report from Allen County, Ohio School, Funk proceeds to give in a bit more detail the order which seems advisable to him, and an order which since came to be quite universally used. He advises the following:

> "At the opening, if there be time, three or four short hymns or parts of hymns may be sung. . . . Then a short portion of Scripture should be read. . . . This selection of Scripture should be one that is appropriate and adapted to the understanding of the children. Then a short and appropriate prayer, in words that children can understand, should be offered, and a verse or two of familiar hymn sung after prayer.

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* Brenneman—Herald of Truth—January, 1869

† Note. The "Primers" were primary books on the German language. One of the things which permitted the Sunday School to come in at all in many sections of the Church was the fact that the children were fast leaving the German in favor of the English language. Many people approved of the Sunday School, not because of the religious truths their children were learning, but because they were learning the German language.

> After this the teachers should take their classes, and the person whose duty it is, should distribute the books to those who need them, while the superintendent looks around to see if any new scholars have come in, who have not yet been placed into classes, or if any classes are without a teacher, and arrange all things in proper order. The superintendent should not try to teach a class himself. . . . The teacher should spend in the instruction of their classes from 30 to 40 minutes, and each teacher should endeavor to give such instruction as he or she thinks the class needs and can comprehend. When the time devoted to the lesson has expired, the superintendent should advise the school, and other exercises may be introduced. He may ask questions on the lesson, or on other parts of Scripture. . . . After this a short prayer should be offered, another hymn sung, and the school dismissed."*

This full account of how the early Schools were conducted has been given because of the fact that upon this method practically all of the Sunday Schools were conducted, and fairly represents the average School at the present time, with the exception, however, that the Primers are no longer used and the text of the Bible constitutes the lesson material.

2. *Literature.* Before and during the early days of the Sunday School the editor of the Herald of Truth (Funk) made continuous reprints of Mennonite Catechisms for the benefit and instruction of those persons, young persons in particular, who were preparing to come into the Church. The instruction covered the main points of doctrine as interpreted by the Church.

A German spelling book was also compiled by Benjamin Eby, in 1824, in Ontario, Canada This book was printed by Funk in Elkhart about June, 1869. The book was adapted to school and private use in the study of German, and was frequently used in Sunday Schools. The speller was a strictly Mennonite book in origin and publication. The book was reprinted in 1909 and is still in use by some of the smaller and more conservative sects.†

In 1869 Funk republished a small German Catechism which was originally published by the Mennonite Church in Germany, and republished by Canadian Mennonites (Ontario) in 1824. The book

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* Herald of Truth—April, 1870

† Ibid. June, 1869

was especially adapted to the use of children in day and Sabbath Schools, and where the German school was maintained.

As noted above in 1873 a series of Sunday School lessons appeared in the Herald of Truth. The lessons consisted of Scripture passages, followed by references and explanations. The lessons were arranged for use during the Sunday School hour, with a list of questions following each lesson. Following this came the international uniform lessons printed in lesson quarterlies and are today used quite universally among the Mennonites of America. In the Old Church the graded system is used in some places in the beginner, primary and junior departments.

3. *The Teacher.* From the first Mennonites have always demanded high moral and spiritual qualifications of their teachers. Not a great emphasis was placed on the educational qualification, but great emphasis on the religious and ethical. In the early days of the Sunday School the following standards and ideals were upheld for the teacher:

> (1) He must be a true Christian. (2) He must love the souls of men. (3) He must allow nothing of a trivial character to disrupt his attendance. (4) He must be at his place in the Sunday School in good time. (5) He must take great pains in the preparation of his lesson before hand. (6) He must be a man or woman of prayer, a seeker for spiritual and divine light. (7) He will cultivate a personal concern for every pupil individually for their salvation and pray for each daily and by name. (8) He will instruct his class in the duties of the Christian life as well as in the doctrines of salvation. (9) He will uphold Christ alone as the Savior of mankind. (10) He must not be discouraged if fruit of his labor does not early appear.*

4. *Status in 1870.* A fair review of the Sunday School situation as it had developed until 1870 was given by Funk during that year. Among other things he says that "Most of our Conferences (District Conferences) have given their consent to holding Sabbath Schools, on condition that they are held in accordance with the rules of the Church; . . . . At least we find that they . . . are holding them in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Canada and other places. The bishops and ministers should carefully look after

* Herald of Truth—October, 1870

these schools, and see to it that they are conducted as they should be. . . . ."*

The aim and purpose of the Sunday School by this time had also gone through a process of evolution, bringing it more nearly to what it should be. By this time it was evident that the aim was not so much to teach children to read, or to learn a language, but to teach them the lessons of truth concerning the Bible; to instruct them in their duty toward God and their fellowman; to lead them early to love God and to keep his commandments, and thus prepare them to grow up to be good and useful members of the Church of Christ. Funk also urges that the superintendent should be a man "apt to teach", a man who loves children; a man who is serious, and who will attend regularly. It is not necessary always to elect a minister, in fact a good layman is preferred. Classes were to be organized and constituted on the basis of their requirements. Instruction and classification were to be governed by the intellectual and scholastic attainments of the pupils.†

5. *Apologies.* The opposition to Sunday Schools which continued more or less until 1870, or perhaps later was based on very inadequate foundation. It was urged that the Sunday School would bring into the Church pride, corruption, worldliness, etc. The Sunday School was something "new" and should not be admitted. But thoughtful men contended that the Sunday School should not be rejected because it was something new, but that it should be accepted, whether new or old, on the basis of whether or not it was doing good, and good it was certainly doing, they said.

It is interesting to note some of the arguments presented in favor of the Sunday School by some of the men who were Sunday School enthusiasts. J. M. Brenneman in 1869 presented his argument why a Sunday School should be organized in Allen County, Ohio. He says: First: Because we ourselves are German, and do not have other German schools, and we think that we should not allow the noble German language to pass entirely away from among us; for if our children can not read German, who will read our German books, when once we have passed away from the earth? Second: We should

* Herald of Truth—April, 1870
† Ibid.

have Sunday School not only to teach our children German, but chiefly that we might teach them religious truth. German is still, he says, the daily language of the Mennonite people and they desire to give their children biblical education in their daily language. The principles of human knowledge ("worldly wisdom") are taught in public schools and in the English language. Besides, he says, it is good to be able to use both the English and the German language.*

Another argument frequently presented in favor of the Sunday School was that in sections where Sunday Schools were held children were more serious and better behaved and more attentive in the Church service than in communities where there were no Sunday Schools.

Funk also puts in his characteristic broadside in favor of the Sunday School in the following characteristic words: "A Sunday School, when properly conducted, is of untold value to both children and parents. Those who are still inclined to find fault with such a matter should consider well whether they are not contending against God and His holy will. Oh, beloved brethren, consider the matter well whether it should not be highly necessary for our Church everywhere to establish Sunday Schools, so that the children may not grow up in ignorance and remain unacquainted with God and his commandments. It is truly astonishing how little our young people generally know about this matter; therefore we should make every effort to instruct them and bring them to Jesus."*

It was not an uncommon sight in early days to see parents and children proceed to the meeting-house together, the children going in for Sunday School, while most of the parents were visiting outside of the house and having a social time. After the Sunday School was dismissed the parents and older people would gather in for the sermon. This could be accounted for from the fact that the Sunday School was looked upon by many people as being for the children only, and on the further fact that almost 100% of the early Churches were in rural districts, and without our modern means of travel and

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* Herald of Truth—January, 1869

communication, Sunday was about the only time that the people were able to see each other and to engage in anything like social activities.

In as much as the Central Conference grew out of the Old Conference it should be noted that their first Sunday School was organized at the North Danvers Church about 1869 or '70. The other congregations of the Conference began Sunday School as they were organized. The first literature used in Sunday School was the Bible for adults, and for the children the German Primer, designed to teach the German language, was used. When the Lesson Leaves published by John F. Funk, mentioned above, came out the Central Churches immediately began the use of them. English classes were introduced about 1880, the last German class being discontinued about 1915. Graded lessons have been in use at some places for about fifteen years. The first Sunday School Conference was held about 1898. There are no week-day religious schools nor vacation Bible Schools. The first Bible Normal was held at Carlock, Illinois, January 11 to 18, 1925. The first Christian Workers Conference was held at the Normal Church in 1917 and has been an annual affair since.*

In conclusion it should be noted that in 1919, in the Old Conference, there were reported to the General Sunday School Committee, two hundred and twenty-five Sunday Schools in the United States and Canada. These two hundred and twenty-five schools have an enrollment of about 29,000, with an average attendance of 20,700. There are over 1,000 officers and more than 2,500 teachers. 205 schools met every Sunday. The expenditures for supplies of 138 schools amounted to $7,039.90. Forty-two schools have teachers' meetings, and nineteen have teachers' training classes. 120 schools distribute the "Words of Cheer", and 95 use the "Beams of Light". 22 use periodicals outside of our own publications. 123 schools received missionary offerings. 80 used and encouraged children's investment funds. 40 schools observed General Missionary Day; 98 schools reported their missionary offerings, making a total of $12,-201.06. Only 25 mission schools are reported, and of these only

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* Weber—The Mennonites in Illinois.

eleven had been organized since 1910. During the year 1918 606 pupils were reported received into the Church.*

It should be noted in closing that the last ten and fifteen years have brought notable changes. The Sunday School in the Old Church is not today what it was even twenty-five years ago. Back from our colleges have gone young men and women of training, teaching ability, vision and foresight, all of which have brought favorable and most desired improvements.

* Mennonite Year Book and Directory—1919, p. 17f.

CHAPTER VII

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

(General Conference)

The "General Conference of Mennonites of North America" is not exactly a separate branch of the denomination, but rather a unification movement aiming at the union of all the Mennonites of America. Because of certain progressive views on certain phases of Church polity, religious education, and evangelism, John H. Oberholtzer. with others, were expelled from the local church in Eastern Pennsylvania in 1847. The expelled group immediately organized, began the publication of a paper—the "Religiöser Botschafter", the first Mennonite Church paper printed in America. When this group saw that there was no hope of reconciliation with the Old Church they proceeded to organize a Conference the aim of which was to effect a union of the scattered congregations and eventually unite all branches of American Mennonites.

The results of the movement thus far have been very gratifying. The first Conference was held near West Point, Iowa, in 1860. It was at the 1861 session at Wadsworth, Ohio, that forces were set in motion which resulted in the building of the Wadsworth School noted later. The Conference today has a constituency of more than 20,000 members.*

INTRODUCTION OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS

In view of the chief causes and aims giving rise to this Conference it is only to be expected that aggressive activities, religious education, the Sunday School, and other agencies would be given favorable place and consideration from the beginning.

1. *The Forerunner.* It was probably in the year 1847 that John H. Oberholtzer introduced into the Churches in his charge (The Swamp Churches), near Quakertown, Pennsylvania, what he called

* Smith—The Mennonites—p. 271f.

"Kinderlehre Meetings". It was his purpose to educate the children in a thorough knowledge of the Bible leading them to active membership in the Church. The meetings were held every alternate Sunday afternoon and were fairly well attended by the young people, and in some cases, by the older people. This was one of the first endeavors leading directly to the organized Sunday School among the Mennonites of America. These Kinderlehre Meetings were continued for a number of years. The program of instruction consisted largely of prayer, the singing of hymns, reciting and explanation of answers to the catechism.

2. *The First Sunday School.* During the summer of 1848 a Sunday School was organized in Bertolette's Mennonite Meetinghouse, in Frederick, Pennsylvania, with George S. Nice as superintendent. But as Nice was not a Mennonite, as well as others responsible for the control of the school, this school, though held in a Mennonite Church, can not be classed strictly with Mennonite Sunday Schools. At any rate the school ceased to exist after running a short time.*

The oldest Sunday School in the General Conference, and likely the oldest in America with a continued existence, is the one at West Swamp, Pennsylvania. This school was organized on April 10th, 1857 under the pastorate of John H. Oberholtzer, with A. B. Shelly as superintendent. On April 10th, 1907, the 50th anniversary of this school was observed. In 1908 thirteen of the original officers and teachers of this school, and 45 of the original 78 pupils of the school, were still living. Following the organization of the West Swamp School it was but a short time when all the congregations comprising the Eastern District Conference had their Sunday Schools.†

3. *The Mennonite.* "The Mennonite" was at first a religious monthly journal published by a committee of ministers, the first issue appearing in October, 1885. By this time the Sunday School movement had gotten a good start in the General Conference. In the first

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* Mennonite Year Book and Almanac—1908, p, 26

† Ibid. 1919, p, 34
Krehbiel—Hist. of the Mennonite Gen'l. Conf. p. 423

issue of this paper, however, appears a column on the Sabbath School. The international lessons also appeared in its columns regularly. In the first issue it was urged that "The Sabbath School is a part of the congregation and should never be considered as a separate institution."

4. *The Sunday School Teacher.* In the second issue of The Mennonite, November, 1885, is given the Sunday School Teacher's Ten Commandments, which give a very good idea of what was expected of a teacher at that time. They are as follows:

> "(1) Pray continually to God for understanding, advice and patience. (2) Hold fast to thy convictions, and continue therein in faith. (3) Love and respect thy scholars. (4) Consider well thy plans. (5) Win the attention and love of the scholars. (6) Strive to express thy thoughts and convictions distinctly. (7) Teach the whole plan of salvation. (8) Never forget that a tree is known by its fruit. (9) Frequently prove whether thy teaching benefits thy scholars. (10) Hope continually for fruit of thy labor."

5. *Status in* 1889. Quite complete reports on the Sunday School of the Eastern District Conference frequently appear in "The Mennonite". These reports show that A. M. Fretz, A. B. Shelly, I. K. Freed, C. v. d. Smissen, N. B. Grubb, F. R. Rosenberger, W. S. Gottshall, Wm. Gehman, J. Weinberger, P. Kline, and J. S. Moyer were among the leading Sunday School spirits. The reports also show that until 1889 Sunday Schools were established at Germantown, Deep Run, Churchville, Philadelphia, Schwenksville, East Swamp, West Swamp, Upper Milford, Bowmansville, Boyertown, Richland, and other places. In October, 1889 these schools reported a total number of teachers, 112; total number of scholars, 1,217; amount collected for expenses, $839.15, and for missions, $85.36. In these schools the English language was used almost entirely, with occasional German. In some places the school was divided into departments, according to the age of the pupils.

MOVEMENTS IN THE CENTRAL STATES

While it is true that by the middle of the 19th century Sunday Schools were organized in practically all of the Protestant Churches in the central States, yet the Mennonites had not

at that time adopted them. However, the development of Religious Education in the Middle District Conference (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Iowa), is a matter of considerable interest.

1. *The First School.* Moyer, in his studies of the district says: *

> "From such evidence as could be obtained, it seems quite certain that the first Sunday School established in the district was organized near Pandora, Ohio, in the Swiss congregation.....The school was held in the Beech Tree schoolhouse, two miles southeast of Pandora. They (older citizens) also agree that it was before the Civil War (probably in 1859.) The Sunday School met on Sunday afternoons every two weeks from April to September, 1859. There is no evidence that it continued for more than one summer. . . . The Sunday School had no direct connection with the Swiss Church, though the organizers were members of the Church. A few years later another Sunday School was begun in a schoolhouse, a few miles south of the Swiss Church, where the Ebenezer Church now stands. In 1865 a Sunday School was organized at Summerfield, Illinois; in 1869 at Berne, Indiana; in 1874, at Pulaski, Iowa; in 1875 at Donnellson, Iowa, also at Noble, Iowa; and in 1876 at Trenton, Ohio. At Wayland, Iowa, they organized about 1900."

Moyer has done an excellent piece of work in connection with the Middle District, but there may be some question concerning the first Sunday School. In a letter from E. Hunsberger, Wadsworth, Ohio, to the editor of "Das Christliche Volksblatt", dated December, 24th, 1857, is the following: †

> "Our Sunday School we closed sometime ago. It had an attendance of 100 children, who during the past summer made good progress in learning. Last Fall we started a Bible class, which many now regard as a very necessary and profitable work. Both young and old now come with Bibles and New Testaments in hand. The chief purpose in this Bible class is to prepare men and women teachers for teaching the Word of God in the Sunday School, and to instruct the Christian better."

This information from Hunsberger gives evidence not only of a Sunday School at Wadsworth, Ohio, as early as 1857, but also that in the same school there was a teachers' training class.

2. *Organization.* The general plan of organization in the

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* Moyer—Relg. Educ. in Mennonite Churches Comprising the Middle District Conference—p. 17.

† Hunsberger—Das Christliche Volksblatt—Jan. 13th, 1858

Sunday School at the present time is much the same as that in the Old Conference. In every case the superintendent is the chief executive, and is assisted by others. All the schools have secretaries and treasurers; also a librarian, chorister, and pianist. In most of the schools there is a committee that has general supervision over the school, this committee being called the Educational Committee and is generally chosen annually. Departmental superintendents are found in about one-half of the schools. Cradle roll departments are organized in most schools. In most cases the primaries and beginners have their own rooms.

3. *Literature.* Definite information relative to literature used is not always obtainable. At Berne, Indiana, uniform lessons were introduced in 1873; at Donnellson, Iowa, they have been used since 1875; at Summerfield, Illinois, they were introduced "many years ago". Probably much of the work offered the children was similar to that taught in the Parochial schools, especially the use of Bible stories. Most, if not all, the Sunday Schools used the German language at first, but today the English predominates. Graded lessons are yet more or less of an innovation. At Wayland, Iowa; Bluffton, Ohio; Pandora, Ohio; and Pulaski, Iowa, graded lessons are used to some extent. *

4. *Teachers Training.* In the Salem Sunday School, near Dalton, Ohio, a teachers' training class was conducted by the superintendent about ten years ago (1910), in connection with the regular teachers' meeting. At Trenton, Ohio, a training class was conducted by the pastor during the winter of 1918-19. At Summerfield, Illinois, training classes have been organized at intervals for the last decade. At Bluffton, Ohio, several classes have graduated since 1915. At Noble, Iowa, they have usually had a class at work since 1909. At Berne, Indiana, teachers' training classes have been known for thirty years. Many of the schools in the District have weekly teachers' meetings where the lesson is prepared for the following

* Moyer—Religious Education in Mennonite Churches Comprising the Middle District Conference—p. 18f.

Sunday. There are also a number of organized classes in the District. †

5. *Standards.* The Middle District has adopted a standard for their schools. There are ten points which constitute the standard. I. A cradle roll (5%); a working Home Department (5%). II. Organized class or classes in the young people's department (5%); organized class or classes in adult department (5%). III. A teachers' training class or student pursuing regular courses in Teachers' Training (10%). IV. Graded organization in the following departments: Children's Division, ages 4 to 12. Young People's Division, ages 13 to 24, Adult Division, ages 25 up, including regular promotions (total 5%); graded instruction (5%). V. Regular missionary instruction from platform of class (5%); regular missionary offerings (5%). VI. Regular temperance instruction (10%). VII. Definite decision for Christ urged through a catechetical class or other methods (10%). VIII. Workers' Conference regularly held (10%). IX. A definite written enrollment for each scholar (2%); a personal record of attendance for each scholar (3%); an average attendance of not less than 70% of the total enrollment (5%). X. A yearly report to the Middle District Conference (5%); a yearly offering for the Sunday School work of the Conference (5%).

THE WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE

The Western District Conference includes the States of Kansas, Oklahoma, and part of Nebraska, with a total membership of about 6,000, the majority of whom came from Germany and Russia during the recent 70's. Voth, in his study of this District, presents the following findings: *

When the Mennonites came to Kansas from Europe they knew nothing about the Sunday School. The religious education of these

† Moyer—Religious Education in Mennonite Churches—p. 20f.

* Voth—Religious Education in the Mennonite Churches Comprising the Western District Conference—p. 43 to 54.

people had been taken care of by the day schools, all of which had offered strong courses in religious education.

Soon, however, it became evident that something more was needful and the Sunday School offered an interesting subject for consideration. None of the Mennonites, however, were well disposed toward imitating their American neighbors in anything whatsoever. Consequently the introduction of the Sunday School became a real task in many localities. Like other institutions, the Sunday School was introduced into the Church from the outside. In fact, in many Churches it existed side by side with the Church without receiving recognition or support from the Church.

Most probably the first School in the District was organized on December 26th, 1874 by the Brüdertal Congregation near Hillsboro, Kansas. The members of this congregation settled near Hillsboro in 1873, and for a while worshipped in a school house with some American Mennonites (Old Conference) who had previously organized a Sunday School at that place.

The next School to be organized was at Halstead, Kansas, December 31st, 1876. The first regular meeting was held on January 21st, 1877, and was associated with the regular work of the Church, evidently because this group came from Iowa and Illinois where they had been associated with the Sunday School. Hoffnungsau at Inman, Kansas, and Alexanderwohl, Goessel, Kansas, started schools as early as 1877, so also Beatrice, Nebraska, in the same year. Gnadenberg, near Whitewater, Kansas, had a school in 1879.

Voth states further that nearly all the Sunday Schools before 1880 were held in schoolhouses or private homes, and entirely separate from the Church services. Frequently there were more than one school in one congregation. In 1880 Hoffnungsau had three, and Alexanderwohl, four, each being a distinctly independent organization. In such cases the public school district was the unit.

These early Schools met generally on Sunday afternoon. A few met every Sunday, but most of them every second week. For a number of years many met only during the summer months and

only children took part under the direction of a few devoted adults. The parents usually were indifferent, and even opposed the work. By 1880 the institution was quite generally recognized as beneficial for children, and after this time they gradually became a part of the Church work.

The uniform lessons, says Voth, were introduced quite generally from the beginning. In some places the Bible, Bible History and the Catechism were used. A few of the schools from the beginning did not have class divisions, but the majority had divisions for the children. Graded lessons at present (1922) are scarcely known in the District. Out of twenty-five schools reporting in the District, only four used graded lessons. Some schools still use Bible History and the Catechism. Memory verses are encouraged. Pictures are used in practically all the schools. The plan of organization is practically the same as that in other Mennonite Conferences and districts. A number of Schools have libraries. None of the Schools have as yet departmental divisions. Aside from division into classes there is no graduation. Departmental superintendents are practically unknown. There are but few Teachers' Training classes, a few places having been started and then dropped.

THE MOUNTAIN LAKE DISTRICT

Reverend J. J. Balzer, writing (1923) gives a very interesting and accurate account of the Sunday School at Mountain Lake, Minn. He says: *

> The history of the Sunday School in Minnesota dates back to October 4th, 1886, although some Sunday School work was being done through summer months in two different farm houses and even in one of the first Churches with a class of smaller children. On above named date, two young men, Isaac I. Bargen and myself, both teachers of the so-called Deutsch-Englische Verein Schule invited the children of the town of Mountain Lake into a Sunday School. Fourteen, 12 girls and 2 boys, responded, and on the following Sunday each of these brought another one, and four Sundays later we had reached the one hundred mark and continued to grow until extra seats had to be provided..... Mr. Bargen was acting

* Balzer—Manuscript is in my private library.

superintendent and myself, vice-superintendent. On the last day of May, 1887, we carried out a mission program, and the offering amounted to $96.63, which was sent to the Baptist mission in India.

In the fall of 1887 Mr. Bargen took a position in one of the High Schools in St. Paul, and I was chosen superintendent..... In the spring of 1888 the Elder of the first organized church in this community, Rev. Aaron Wall, invited me....to organize a Sunday School in his congregation..... Mrs. John P. Rempel was chosen my successor..... We began the work with six classes, and the Lord blessed and prospered the work greatly..... But on came a storm. Conservative old members of the Church objected and openly protested. The Sunday School was closed, the Elder resigned, the Church was disorganized, and I left again for the old home union Sunday School in town, and during the following year, on account of the anti-Sunday School movement, three divisions took effect from the one united Church organization, the so-called Wall Church, The Bergfeld Church, and our dear Bethel Church . . But in spite of the opposition . . . all three organizations kept up a Sunday School. The Bethel Church built a church and the union Sunday School....united with the Church organization. Meanwhile the Mennonite Brethren Church was organized, and another Sunday School was opened, and after two years....there were nine Sunday Schools in operation, of which five are rural and four are in the towns of Mountain Lake and Butterfield . . . .

Balzer states further that the total enrollment of all the Sunday Schools, according to latest report, is about 1,570, of which about 60 per cent. are children and 40 per cent. adults. The international uniform lessons are generally used, but most of the Schools also use the Fifty-two Bible Stories. Dissatisfaction is growing . . with the international methods . . . The graded lesson system is not used. Sunday School papers are not given as most people subscribe for them. The principal language is the German, but each Sunday School has several classes, where the English is used..... The Schools are all in growing condition. I myself was superintendent of our school for twenty years.

Concluding, then, it should be said that the history of the Sunday School in the two Conferences, the Old and the General Conference, has been dealt with primarily, while many of the lesser Conferences have not been mentioned, because of the fact that what is true of the two leading Conferences is true generally of the rest relative to dates, organization, methods and ideals. Nearly all of the various branches of Mennonites in America have their Sunday Schools which are conducted in much the same manner as the two

mentioned. In practically all of them Sunday School is held each Sunday before the preaching hour and are continued through the year. The international uniform lessons are generally used, with the graded lessons in some of the more progressive schools.

CHAPTER VIII.

OTHER RELIGIOUS EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

Besides the Sunday School there are, in practically all of the American Mennonite Conferences, other agencies which function largely in religious education. Notwithstanding the fact that there has always been severe and unjust criticism preferred against the introduction of educational movements and agencies into the denomination, yet, the past twenty-five years have witnessed great progress along educational lines. The following institutions function in rather a large way at the present time.

1. *Schools and Colleges.* Later chapters give the rise and development of Mennonite educational institutions. Sufficient to say in this connection that all of the collegiate and academic institutions give to the Bible and the teaching of religion a very large place. All of the colleges give full courses in Bible, and all except one, Goshen College, require biblical courses for graduation. Courses in Old Testament, New Testament, Biblical Literature and History, Christian Ethics, Greek, Christian Doctrine, Comparative Religions, Religious Education, Biblical and Systematic Theology, are found offered in practically all of the Mennonite Colleges. The same is true, in some measure, of the Academies and Bible Schools, such as Oklahoma Bible Academy, Mountain Lake Academy, Zoar Academy (Inman, Kansas), Goessel Academy, The Gretna (Manitoba) Normal School, The Eastern Mennonite School, and others. In recent years since some of the State Universities have begun to credit certain Biblical courses, more Biblical courses have been taken by the students, with the result that Mennonite Colleges have introduced courses and departments of Religious Education, and with the final result that these institutions have turned out an unusual number of religious leaders and theological students.

2. *Short Bible Courses.* In practically all of the collegiate and academic institutions short Bible courses are offered annually,

continuing from four to twelve weeks, given generally during the winter months. These courses cover very briefly, in a general and academic way, much the same ground as is covered in the regular courses. They are put on a more popular basis; in many cases a popular Bible Lecturer being brought in for one week. These short courses are intended for such persons who desire Bible study but who have not the time or opportunity to attend during the entire year.

3. *Local Bible Schools.* There are a number of local communities in the States and Canada where annual Bible courses are offered, the courses running from four to eight weeks. The school at Kitchener, Ontario, is perhaps the best organized and conducted of any of these schools. This school was instituted by order of the Ontario (Old Mennonite) Conference in 1902. In 1903 the first work, which was principally doctrinal, was offered. From year to year the Conference ordered a continuation of the work largely under the direction of Bishop S. F. Coffman, of Vineland, Ontario. Coffman is a well qualified man for this type of work and has always given to it his best attention. Under his supervision a six years' course has been arranged, the courses being much the same as those afforded in the academic institutions.* Similar courses, though not so complete and well organized, have been offered in schools at Canton, Ohio, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and a few other places in western states. It is not at all likely that this type of local school will remain permanent for the reason that the class of students who formerly took the work are now attending High School and go on to College.

4. *Bible Conferences.* About twenty-five years ago the "Bible Conference" came into the Old Conference, and was limited almost entirely to this Conference. The Indiana District, in 1903, passed the following resolution: "That this Conference grant the holding of Bible Conferences in the District." † Such Conferences

* Hartzler—Education Among the Mennonites of America-Monograph, for full outline of courses—p, 483. My library.

† Minutes—Indiana Conference, 1903, p. 186.

were held in other states, however, before this time, as early as 1898 or earlier.

These conferences were local, limited generally to a particular congregation. The method of procedure was about as follows: Any local Church so desiring might arrange for a Conference. A committee was appointed and a program arranged. By vote of the congregation instructors, generally two, were selected, men from other sections of the Church. The program generally called for two studies in the morning, two in the afternoon, with one in the evening and an evangelistic sermon following. The subjects for study were outlined on chart, placed before the congregation, well filled with "proof" texts, which texts were distributed among persons of the audience for reading at the proper time, the members of the audience reading while the instructor attempted to prove his doctrine. The subjects most frequently treated were the doctrines and customs peculiar to the denomination. The Bethel Congregation, near Garden City, Missouri, held one such conference in January, 1899, while the congregation in Sommerset County, Pennsylvania held one in December of the same year. While these conferences did a great deal of good in their day, they are at present a thing of the past, the popular Bible Lecture Courses fast taking their place.

5. *Sunday School Conventions.* Evidently the first Sunday School Convention among the Mennonites was held by the General Conference, a brief report of which is given in 1876. The invitation to this convention reads as follows: "All the friends of the Sunday School of our congregations are herewith invited to attend a Sunday School Convention to be held in the First Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, on Monday, 10 A. M., October 2nd, (1876) to discuss points relating to the work of the Sunday School. . . ." * This invitation was signed by a number of laymen and a few ministers. This was a new departure and was evidently the first in the denomination. Following this, however, the Sunday School Convention was quite common in the Eastern District Conference. Va-

*Mennonitische Friedensbote—September 1st, 1876.

rious questions concerning the Sunday School materials to be used, methods of teaching, qualification of teachers, were considered. In the Western District Conference the Convention came in in 1884. †

In the Old Conference the first Sunday School Convention was likely held on May 26th, 1890, at the Christian Eby Church, Berlin (Kitchener), Ontario, at the call of the Ontario Conference. At this convention questions as the following were considered: Is the Sunday School evangelical? What means to employ to make the Sunday School successful? Duties and responsibilities of teachers. Are the Lesson Helps a benefit to the School? On this question some fears were expressed. *

In 1891 a second convention was held in Ontario and the following questions considered: How organize and conduct Sunday School on the non-resistant doctrine? Is it beneficial to hold Teachers' Meetings? Bible teaching to infant classes. Singing. Sunday School Literature, and how encourage young people in Christian work? †

During the same year (1891) several conventions were held in other sections of the Old Church. The Slate Hill Church, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, held a convention on April 11th. The Churchtown Church held a convention on June 6th of the same year. At the Slate Hill Convention the following questions arose: Should children commit scripture verses to memory? Should rewards of merit be offered? The answer to this question was, No. Best methods of teaching primary classes? The recorded answer to this question is as follows: "The Sunday School is not the place for the children to learn to read." ‡

In the Old Conference, the Sunday School Convention, like the Sunday School, was first tolerated, rather than encouraged. On May 13th and 14th, 1896, the Ohio Mennonite Church Conference passed a resolution allowing Sunday School Conventions on con-

†Western District Conference Report—p. 226.
*Herald of Truth—January, 1891.
† Ibid . . . . . June, 1891.
‡Ibid . . . . . 1891.

dition: (1) That the Church consent, and (2) That they continue not more than two days. * In Indiana the Church Conference, as early as 1894 raised the question: "Are the Sunday School Conferences, conducted by Sunday School workers, with the aid and council of the ministry, a benefit to the cause of Christ when they are conducted with the same object for the Sunday School as the Church Conference is held for the Church?" The answer to this question reads as follows: "Sunday School Conference is beneficial when conducted in accordance with the conditions mentioned in the question, the program for the Sunday School Conference to be subject to the approval of the Conference District in which the Conference is to be held." †

The Herald of Truth, during the 90's, reports numerous conventions in practically all sections of the Church. Roseland, Nebraska in 1895; at Canton, Kansas, during the same year, also Kolona, Iowa, in 1899; the first convention in Illinois at Science Ridge Church, near Sterling, on May 20th, 1896; the Amish Mennonite Conference in Illinois in June, 1903. The "Sixth Annual Sunday School Union" of Logan and Champaign Counties, Ohio, reported for December, 1902. Practically every section of the Old Church at the present time holds its annual Convention.

6. *The Christian Endeavor.* The Christian Endeavor in the General and several other Conferences is quite synonymous with the Young People's Meeting, or Bible Reading, in the Old Conference; they serve the same purpose. "The first Christian Endeavor Society in the Mennonite Church was organized in the Hereford Mennonite Church, January 15, 1887, by Reverend C. H. A. van der Smissen, the pastor of the Church. The second society was organized in the First Mennonite Church of Philadelphia, with Joseph B. Bechtel, one of the original members of the Hereford (Pennsylvania) Society as its president, Oct. 18, 1892."* Young People's

*Ohio Mennonite Conference Minutes—1896.

†Indiana Mennonite Conference Report—1894.

* The Mennonite—June 29th, 1922.

Meetings had been held before this, but these were the first Endeavor Societies and they are both still in operation.

The General Conference at the present time has its Senior, Intermediate and Junior Christian Endeavor. The first Society in the Middle District was organized at Summerfield, Illinois, in 1890. This was followed by others: Berne, Indiana, 1893; Pulaski, Iowa, 1894; Noble, Iowa, about 1895, and the Swiss Church near Bluffton, Ohio, about 1895. By 1900 they were quite common. †

In the Old Conference the Young People's Meetings were sanctioned about 1896 or '97. The Annual Conference of Ontario passed, on May 28th, 1896, the following resolution: "That edification meetings (Generally known as Young People's Meetings) may be held in the meeting-house."‡ The Indiana Conference, in 1897, raised the question: "Does this Conference sanction Bible-Readings, if so, how should they be conducted?" The following answer was made: "We recommend that Bible Readings be maintained in all the Churches when they can be held with the counsel of the Church and the edification of the congregation. . . . That ministers and older people should attend and assist."*

Practically all of the various branches of the denomination have some form of Christian endeavor at present.

7. *Bible Lecture Courses.* The Bible Conference method of instruction, noted above, ceased almost entirely during the Great War. The demand for more definite and scholarly treatment of Gospel themes has grown acute. It is not a question of a new Gospel, but one of an intelligent restatement of old Gospel themes, a statement which wins and satisfies the High School and College constituency. The war raised the question: "What is permanent and worth while in our faith?" It is an honest question and must be honestly and intelligently met. Emphasis has shifted from the evangelistic to the didactic because men desire to reassure themselves of the truthfulness of Christianity. It was this condition that gave rise to

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†Moyer-Relg. Educ. In Middle District, etc.—p. 26.

‡Herald of Truth—July, 1896.

* Indiana Mennonite Conference Report—1897.

the Bible Lecture Courses. The great themes of the Kingdom of God, the Life and Teaching of Jesus, The Life and Work of Paul, the Great Christian Doctrines, Etc. have become popular and have proved a great asset to the faith of many. The demand for this line of work is greater at present than the supply of lecturers can meet. The colleges, Witmarsum Theological Seminary in particular, have been drawn on heavily for lecturers. Any local congregation so desiring may call a lecturer to deliver such courses.

8. *Instruction in Catechism.* The Mennonites in Europe started the use of the catechism in the instruction of their children. The General Conference today, which has a large German and Russian constituency, still uses the catechism. Each year, in practically all the Churches a class is organized for instruction. The young people join the class voluntarily, their ages ranging generally from about nine to eighteen. Moyer, in speaking of the Middle District Conference, says that instruction in the catechism is quite common in the Churches. The book which is used was prepared several centuries ago and has undergone several editions. The classes continue usually about twelve weeks each year. It is a means of preparing the individual for membership in the Church. Revival and evangelistic meetings are scarcely known among the Churches of the Middle District, the catechism method being used to win people to the Church. The didactic method, based on Matthew 28:19, is emphasized. In most cases the minister conducts the class in catechism, the class usually beginning after each New Year. Near Easter time the minister gives members of the class an opportunity to express their desire for union with the Church through baptism. The catechism is arranged in the form of questions and answers, the answers being based on verses in the Bible. Sometimes the answers are memorized; and sometimes the names of the Books of the Bible are memorized.*

In the Old Mennonite Church, however, the catechism method is not so common. A small catechism was used for a time in the Sunday School. In the Old Church, until more recent years, children and young people were really not expected to unite with the Church until

*Moyer-Religious Education in the Middle District, etc., p. 14f.

later in life. Just before marriage the young man and woman was expected to "join the Church". In more recent years, with the coming of evangelistic meetings, the young people began to unite with the Church upon confession of their faith in Christ. Instruction would then be given by the ministers for several months, which instruction was then followed by baptism.

9. *Young People's Conference.* Aside from the Christian Endeavor Societies noted above, some of which have united with the world-wide movement while others remained strictly congregational and local, there has developed in the Old Church a new movement known as "The Young People's Conference". This Conference had its origin in France during the days of reconstruction by young Mennonites and Friends. Prominent among the leaders of this movement were men like Payson Miller, J. C. Meyer, Roy Allgyer, A. J. Miller, O. B. Gerig, Ralph Snavely, C. C. Janzen and others. The first convention was held at Clermont-en-Argonne, Meuse, France on June 20th to 22nd, 1919. After considering some of the particular problems of the denomination a constitution was drawn up in which was stated the purpose of the movement. The purpose states: *

> "(1) To deepen the spiritual life of the Mennonite Church. (2) To study our responsibilities that grow out of our attitude toward war. (3) To study the problems of the Mennonite Church as regards: (a) Church organization and administration; (b) Its relation to the social order; (c) Its relation to the State; (d) Its obligation to missionary endeavor; (e) Christian Education; (f) Relief and reconstruction among stricken people. (4) To inspire young men and women of the Mennonite Church to consecrate their lives to the conservation and extension of the principles of Jesus Christ. (5) To encourage the study of the historical development of the Mennonite Church with special emphasis on the life of Menno Simons. (6) To establish a basis for closer cooperation between young people and those of maturer judgment. (7) To foster an appreciation and better understanding between Mennonites of America and Mennonites of foreign countries.....(8) To provide for the discussion of life-work problems where interviews with men of experience and training in various vocations may be had."

This movement has its roots in the well founded conviction that the young people, in particular the college constituency, did not have

*First Report of Young People's Conference.

sufficient opportunity for self-expression, or to devote their lives to the larger fields of service, under an efficient and sympathetic leadership. Experiences during the war convinced the young men that they were in need of a religious leadership which they did not have. There was a conviction among many that the application of the doctrine of non-resistance by the older leadership was little less than a failure. There was a decided conviction that if Mennonitism was to survive and serve the world in the promotion of the Kingdom of God it must be placed upon an intelligent and rational, rather than traditional, basis. But this movement, like all other forward movements in the Old Church, was met with most severe, unjust and unchristian criticism and opposition.* What the future of this movement shall accomplish remains for some later historians to note.

In conclusion it may be said that through all of these agencies, existing as they do more or less in all of the various branches of the denomination, are seen certain significant tendencies: the tendency toward better and stronger educational opportunities; toward better qualified and more efficient leadership; toward a larger and more worthy religious program; away from the formal and traditional to the vital and intelligent. If these tendencies prevail it will require no prophet to predict the future of the denomination.

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*Note: For a more complete treatment of the opposition to the movement, and the men leading the opposition—see monograph—"Education Among the Mennonites of America"—p. 497. My private library.

CHAPTER IX

THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM*

When the Mennonites went from Prussia to Russia they went to a country where even the rudiments of education were accessible only to the favored few. In Russia it was a State offense to do any religious work among native citizens where only the established church was permitted to operate and then in the Russian language only. Under these circumstances it was necessary for the Mennonites, if they would hold their children for the Church, to keep up their German language. For this purpose they obtained permission from the Czar to build their own school system, a system which for many years was the chief support for their religion.

No sooner had these people reached America in the 70's when the question arose concerning the organization and promotion of their parochial school system in much the same way as they did in Russia. The free school system of America did not appeal to them for the reason that they saw in it an avenue through which their children would pass from the German to the English language and thereby cause the whole people to lose religiously.

While many of the families in Kansas and other western States were still living in sod houses, the parochial school was begun, taught by men who were teachers in Russia and Germany. To their American neighbors this seemed strange and even unpatriotic. But when it is known that these people who came from Russia, many of them at least, believed that the maintenance of their religion depended in a large measure on the preservation of the German language, their parochial schools will be easily understood. Religion and language were one and inseparable.

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*Note: I am greatly indebted to President J. W. Kliewer, of Bethel College, for the major part of the information contained in this chapter. Rev. Kliewer was born in Russia, came to this country, grew up on the threshold of the parochial school and is today the best informed man on the subject.

DEVELOPMENT OF GERMAN SCHOOLS

The feeling between the Russian and German Mennonite was not always cordial. Besides this in a pioneer country like Kansas or Nebraska, when the Mennonites settled there, public schools were not the most efficient. There was not a little disagreement on numerous points relative to the German schools. But mutual relations in time grew better and support for the schools was increased. The public schools also won the favor of many who at first had been opposed, seeing that conditions in America were not those in Russia. The German schools grew gradually in Central Kansas and soon became a prominent feature in the educational system of the State.

The time when the German schools might be held was a difficult question in some cases. There was no desire to conflict with the English schools. If the German school was to be held in the public school building, as it frequently was, then, evidently it could not be held at the same time as the English school. In some communities special buildings were erected for the German schools and either both German and English taught in them, or the children were sent alternately to parochial school one year and to the English school the next. But this method was unsatisfactory. The most satisfactory arrangement, and for that reason the most predominating, was the one to give part of the school year to the German and part to the public school. Here too one of two methods was possible; either a teacher was hired who could teach both languages, or an English and a German teacher of the same neighborhood exchanged places. In cities and towns where the public school was in session nine months in the year, the German schools were held during the summer vacation, the school being in session only in the forenoon.

1. *The Course of Study.* The branches taught varied in number and depended on the length of the term. Chief emphasis was put on morals and religion, German and singing. Morals were usually taught from suitable stories read or told by the teacher. Religious instruction included the learning of Bible stories and memorizing Scripture passages. An elementary course in Church History was offered to advanced classes, and where patrons did not entertain denominational differences, the catechism was sometimes used. In Ger-

man, reading, writing, grammar, essay writing and declamation were the chief exercises. In singing the rudiments of music were taught and some of the best known Church hymns. The Geography of Germany and Palestine was taught. In schools whose term was so long as to preclude attendance of public schools, a full common school course was offered.

2. *Financial Support.* The moneys necessary for the support of these schools were secured in various ways. Very often a teacher would open a school upon his own responsibility and charge a specified monthly tuition. If such teacher secured a sufficiently large number of students, and proved a popular teacher, he fared very well financially; if not then he had to content himself with the good he was doing. In other places a board was elected, either by the church or by a community of several churches, whose duty it was to make all necessary arrangements and provide funds for the school. In some cases the Church or community had a standing fund the income of which went to the support of the school.

There was another method in districts where all the voters and taxpayers were supporters of the German school. A teacher was hired for the English school and paid a salary considerably higher than he could ordinarily expect. When his English school closed he would teach the German school for very small pay or even for nothing. But this method received some severe criticism. According to the State law, German may be taught in the public schools only as a language, but no schools where any language but the English was spoken as the recitation language may receive State support. It was a question of whether or not the State law was complied with in the appropriation of school moneys. The German Teachers' Association voted its disapproval of the method.

3. *Standards.* In view of all conditions concerned the standards of these schools were very good. Several things contributed toward the maintenance of standards of comparative excellence. One was the work of the schools which gave the necessary preparation for teaching German. Another was the German Teachers' Society which met twice each year; and a third was the German Teachers' Institute which held a two weeks' session every August.

A TYPICAL SCHOOL*

To observe in detail one of the typical parochial schools will give one a better comprehension and appreciation of the institution. In the Mountain Lake, Minnesota community we have a fair type of such school. The school itself can not be well understood without first taking into consideration the outstanding characteristics of the community.

1. *Characteristics.* The larger percent of the people of the Mountain Lake community came from Russia to America during the years 1870 and 1880. As they came to America they brought with them many of their Russian ideals and customs, and these they were not anxious to exchange for the ideals and customs of the American people.

In every community in the North and West where Mennonites settled during the last fifty years the language question has been amongst the foremost problems. The people of the Mountain Lake community brought with them from Russia a low-German dialect, a combination of German and Dutch. In their religious services they generally used and maintained the German; many of them believing that the giving up of the German language meant nearly the same as giving up their religion. For this reason they urged strenuously that the German language be maintained. At the present time the change from the German to the English is being made quite rapidly.

Going, as the Mennonites did, from Germany to Russia in about 1788, they were required, because of the condition of the country to which they went, to build and maintain their own schools. In Russia they finally built up a fairly strong school system after their own ideas. Coming to America one hundred years later they naturally felt that in order to maintain their identity they must continue their own school system. They were firm believers in handing down to their children their rich heritage of the past and this heritage involved

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*Note: For information concerning the Mountain Lake community I am indebted to several persons living in the community, Mr. Gerhard Buhler in particular. Aside from personal observation in the community, I have in my private library manuscripts giving detail description of the school system.

language, morals and religion, and the best way to accomplish this was through the elementary schools. Higher education was at the time not encouraged.

Until about 1880 few, if any, persons attended institutions of higher learning in preparation for the teaching profession or for the ministry. Elementary education was thought necessary; but the less of higher education the better they thought. Teachers and ministers were drawn from the elementary schools. A man with the gift of speech, educated or uneducated, who felt it his duty to preach, was chosen for that task. Sermons were usually written and laboriously read on the Sabbath. Sometimes the sermons of other men were read with perhaps a few comments.

This type of preaching and teaching continued for a number of years when a few men with religious zeal and deeper spiritual insight set about to raise the standards of education, morals and religion in the community. Among these men were Rev. Aaron Wall, Rev. J. J. Balzer, Rev. H. H. Regier, Rev. H. H. Voth. From this time on higher education was given a larger place and a more sympathetic hearing. Mr. I. I. Bargen and John Remple in 1881 went to Mankato Normal School. In 1882 H. H. Regier attended Rochester Theological Seminary, New York State. In the same year J. J. Balzer attended Mt. Pleasant (Iowa) University. In 1882-84 H. J. Fast attended Mankato Normal School, and in 1884-85 Rochester Theological Seminary. John Remple attended both Mankato Normal School and Mt. Pleasant University. Out of this group of men who pushed ahead on higher education came the leaders of the community for nearly forty years or more.

2. *Rise of the Local Parochial School.* Before the establishment of the permanent school in the Mountain Lake community there were a number of schools held in private homes where instruction was given to the children of the neighborhood. In a document written by John Remple in 1923 we have the following information concerning the schools held in private homes:

> John Becker, an experienced teacher from Russia, and farmer, opened in his home in 1880 to 1894 on the farm, about six miles southeast of Mountain Lake, a German school. In spite of his large family he took the children from a distance

into his home teaching and boarding them for a very small sum of money. The children were given instruction in their mother tongue, Biblische Geschichte, Sprachlehre, lessons in the Bible, writing, arithmetic, geography, Aufsatz and singing.

Dietrich Walde, from 1878 to 1885, also an immigrant from Russia, and a teacher in Russia, gave instruction in a similar way about twelve miles northwest of Mountain Lake. Dietrich Peters, an immigrant of 1876, living about twelve miles west of Mountain Lake, during the years 1880 and 1896, conducted a similar school.

David Froese, also an immigrant of 1875, opened his home, beginning his school with ten children, about five miles west of Mountain Lake, during the years, 1876 to 1879. He boarded the children for very small remuneration.

I. I. Bargen, also an immigrant, taught a German school in Bergthal, north of Butterfield during the years 1878 to 1880.

H. H. Regier, 1884 to 1886, taught a similar school in his home on the farm, three miles south of town.

I. I. Bargen, also an immigrant, taught a German school six or seven miles west of Mountain Lake and a few years later taught a school a bit farther west.

H. D. Loewen taught a German school nine miles southwest of Mountain Lake (1890-1894) and in 1892 a school building was erected at this place. During 1895-'96 David Janzen taught here.

Gerhard Rahn, who was later ordained to the ministry, taught a school in his own home from 1889 to 1893, about five miles east of Mountain Lake.

Peter H. Balzer, from 1895 to 1898, taught a school ten miles northeast of Mountain Lake.

In 1896 there was built in Bergtal, north of Butterfield, a German school. For ten years J. A. Becker and David Becker taught here. Since that time a number of others have taught in the same place. *

3. *The Bruederthal Church School.* The numerous schools held in private homes, as noted above, while very helpful, yet seemed unsatisfactory as a whole. One difficulty was in that they did not reach enough children. Besides this most of the teachers were men who were at the same time farmers, with little financial backing, men of limited educational qualifications, and teaching in many cases became something of a side issue.

Under these circumstances it was not difficult to see the need of a better system. Aaron Wall was among the first to see and express the need. It was in 1893, when the meeting-house was no long-

*Rempel—Document by Rempel is in my private library.

er large enough and the need for a new building became evident, that Wall urged the use of the old building for a school. Wall also endowed the school with $1,000.00, the income of which was to go toward current expenses.

The aim and purpose of this school was to create interest in religion and the Church; to instruct the young in the fundamental doctrines of the Church and the Bible, as well as to teach them the German language.

The Board of control consisted at first of three persons, but later this number was increased to six, the members being elected for a period of three years each. The Board was responsible for the control of the school, securing teachers and all necessities in the proper continuation of the school. The school was supposed to be self-supporting. But the money received from tuition and board as a rule did not meet the demand and the church was required to meet the deficit. The support in both students and money was generally good.

In the course of instruction religion always had a large part; the Bible was always given the central place. Bible History (Biblische Geschichte) was emphasized. Besides this, German grammar, German language, Arithmetic, Geography, Church History, General History, Singing, and some English reading were offered. Most of the courses were taught in German at first but later one-half was offered in English.

The teachers of this school, with the possible exception of one, A. J. Becker, had nothing more than an elementary training preparatory for the profession. The leading qualifications were those of a good character and a fair knowledge of the Bible. The salaries were usually small, not over $60.00 per month, until 1921-'22 when Maria Wiebe, the first lady teacher in the school, received $100.00 per month.

At the present time this school is closed and it is likely that it will never be opened. There are several reasons for this: (1) the coming and opportunities of the public school and the payment of double school tax. (2) The coming of the High School into the community. (3) The German Preparatory school in the same community meets fairly well the Church requirements. And (4), the pre-

dominance of the English language. Children growing up in the parochial school with little or no English find themselves seriously handicapped. There is a demand for English today which the parochial school does not meet.

In conclusion it may be noted that what we find in the Mountain Lake community by way of history and school development is quite the same as that found in many communities in the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and other western States, as well as in parts of western Canada. To know one community thoroughly means a fair knowledge of the rest. In all of these communities there is today a strong tendency toward the High School and more or less toward collegiate training which means that the parochial school system will speedily be replaced by the modern High School which in turn will present a strong lead toward the College and the University.

CHAPTER X

THE GERMAN PREPARATORY SCHOOL

The essential difference between the Parochial School and the German Preparatory School, is not so much in aim and purpose as it is in the content of the courses offered and the grade and age of pupils. The Preparatory School, in fact, is a parochial school. The elementary parochial school compares quite favorably with the elementary public school, while the Preparatory School compares more nearly with the public High School.

There are a number of places in the West—Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Minnesota, and the Dakotas, as well as in the Canadian Northwest, where the Preparatory School is yet maintained. What is true, however, concerning the Parochial Schools is also true concerning the German Preparatory Schools, namely, that with the coming of the public schools into these pioneer districts as well as the High Schools, and the more complete Americanization of the constituency it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain these schools.

Among the more popular Preparatory Schools at the present time are those at Mountain Lake, Minnesota, Hillsboro, Kansas, and Meno, Oklahoma. Again, in our study, we shall secure a better working knowledge of this school system if we take one typical school and follow it out in some detail, keeping in mind the fact that what is true in one case is quite true in all the rest. Having observed personally the three schools above mentioned, the writer prefers to limit the present study more or less to the school at Mountain Lake for the reason that a more detail study has been made of this one and besides, there is more available documentary material on this school.*

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SCHOOL

1. *Conditions Giving Rise to The School.* The conditions giv ing rise to this school were very similar to those giving rise to the

*Documents by G. Buhler, J. J. Balzer, I. I. Bargen and others in my private library.

Parochial Schools in Russia. The people having come from Russia so recently where they owned and controlled their own schools naturally led them to desire and attempt the same thing in America. Besides this the public schools of the community were not very highly developed at the time and there was no High School at all. There was a strong conviction among the Mennonites that unless they had their own schools, in which they could teach whatsoever subjects they liked, in particular the German language, they would not be able to maintain their language, their traditions and their religious ideals. In view of this they set to work to build and control their own schools.

In 1884 the local district public school in Mountain Lake was divided into two departments, the one being taught by J. J. Balzer in which German and the Bible were taught. This method was continued for two years and with some success. In the spring of 1887 Mr. I. I. Bargen, a graduate of Mankato Normal School, organized in the community an Educational Society with some thirty members. In the autumn of the same year the German-English Preparatory School was opened with seventy pupils ranging from six to twenty years of age. After about two years, however, a reactionary spirit revealed itself which lowered the interest in the school. At the same time Mr. Bargen resigned his position in the community to take another position in the St. Paul, Minnesota High School.

All of this had a deadening effect upon the school movement. The Educational Society dissolved, returning its moneys to its members. But the need of a school and the determination to have one could not be removed from the minds of some of the leading spirits. In spite of opposition and great sacrifice in time and money, Balzer continued his teaching efforts. His work prospered and students increased annually, coming as they did from the Dakotas, and Nebraska primarily.

It was in 1896 that Mr. Balzer invited the friends of the school to meet in the Bethel Church in town for the purpose of considering the future of the school. A goodly number of people responded, and after a brief report of the prevailing conditions a School Society was again organized, pledging the necessary support in the erection of a needed building. Until this time the school had occupied a rented

store room owned by Peter Goerz. A constitution was drafted by the School Society and officers were elected to carry out the project of raising funds, erecting proper buildings and continuing the school.

But three years passed with only hopes of a good building. In 1900 it was resolved by the Society to begin the building not later than June of that year. The farmers of the community agreed to haul all of the materials for the building free of charge. But the officers of the School Society failed to carry out their plans until approached with the question whether they expected to execute the plans of the Society, to which they replied that the sum of $5,000.00 which had been pledged was not sufficient to execute the plan. In the fall of 1901, through the efforts of Mr. Balzer and friends of the Society, the present German Preparatory School building was erected in the town of Mountain Lake. The building was completed in thirty-six days with $500.00 balance in the treasury. The school was opened the same fall with eighty-six students from five different states. The school was then incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

2. *The School In Operation.* Until the year 1901 the school movement in the district was somewhat chaotic. From 1901 on things became more permanent through the organization of a permanent School Society. On October 26th, 1901, the new Society held its first meeting, and on December 6th of the same year the Board met for the first time. The Board is composed of nine members, three being elected each year to serve for a period of three years.

The school year was divided into three terms, of ten, seventeen, and ten weeks consecutively. The tuition charges were governed by the class, or classes, in which a student was registered, and were due the Board at the beginning of each term. In the Children's Class (elementary) the tuition charge was $10.00 per year. Class A (Unterklasse) paid $3.00 for the first term, $6.00 for the second, and $3.00 for the third term. Class B (Oberklasse) paid $5.00 for the first term, $12.00 for the second, and $5.00 for the third term. If students came in for only part of the year reductions were made accordingly.

The tuition, however, did not supply sufficient funds to main-

tain the school. The School Society, to which each member paid $100.00, supported the school. The community also gave fair support in both students and finances.

The aim and purpose of the school was the same as that in other sections of the country where such schools were established, namely, not only to teach the German language and the Bible, but to prepare men and women for Sunday School teaching, preaching and for teaching in public schools. The school also offered business courses for those who desired to enter the commercial world. Courses in English were offered with the view of Americanization.

3. *Courses of Instruction.* The "Teaching Plan" for the first few years consisted of six departments with practically everything given in the German language. (1) The "Unterklasse" course of two years; (2) A four years' course, principally academic; (3) A Teachers' course during the third term of each year for the purpose of preparing teachers for the German Parochial Schools. (4) A Business course of twelve weeks. (5) Class for children beginning to read; and (6) Singing and organ.*

The teachers of this school deserve a great deal more credit than they have ever gotten because of their interest and sacrifice for the promotion of the cause. J. J. Balzer, principal and instructor of Religion and History, had a thorough academic training in Russia. John Becker, teacher of Literature, Mathematics and Latin, received his academic training at Bethel College. D. H. Fast, instructor in the children's classes, was a product of the local institution itself. Miss Dienna Risser was instructor in music. These teachers received very meager salaries, working for $50.00 per month and less.

FROM 1909 TO 1923

1. *The Transition.* During the summer of 1909 J. J. Balzer resigned his position in the school to respond to a call from the Mennonite Educational Institute, Altona, Manitoba. At this place he served as principal for four years. Some differences concerning the school in Mountain Lake arose in the community which encour-

*Catalogue—1903.

aged Balzer's resignation. The doors of the school were then closed for one year, and in 1910-11 a primary school, with about sixteen children, was conducted by D. H. Fast, a former graduate of the school. During the year 1911-12 J. F. Balzer served as principal.

But this uncertain state of affairs was very unsatisfactory. It became evident that Church and School must be brought closer together. Accordingly, on December 4th, 1911, the School Society held a session at which time it offered its school buildings to the five Churches in the town. On March 23d, 1912, the constitution of the Society was amended in preparation for the suggested changes. On August 24th, 1912, a general meeting was called and with a vote of 32 to 1 (there being fifty members present) it was decided to dissolve the School Society and to organize the institution as a Church school in which the five Mennonite Churches in the town should cooperate. The old corporation was accordingly dropped and the new formulated.

2. *The Reorganization.* The new Board of Education consisted of eleven members, two from each of the five Churches, and one member at large. On August 30th, 1912, was held the first meeting of the Board under the new organization. This Board continues to exist at the present time.* The officers of the first year were Henry Voth, President; H. I. Dick, Vice-president; D. G. Lohrenz, Secretary; and D. C. Hiebert, Treasurer. The personnel of this Board remained nearly the same until 1923.

3. *Instructors.* During an earlier year, 1908, the following persons served as instructors: J. J. Balzer, Principal; J. J. Becker, D. H. Fast, and Jacob Schultz. For the year 1914, A. J. Regier served as Principal; N. Hiebert, D. H. Fast, and Anna Ewett served as teachers. In 1922 Hiebert was still Principal, with H. C. Wiens, D. H. Fast, and Elizabeth Schroeder as teachers. It should be noted that following A. J. Regier Mr. H. O. Dyck became Principal and rendered excellent service. A great deal of credit is due these faithful men and women for making the school what it was.

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*Note: For a complete list of officers and Board members to 1922 see my "Education among the Mennonites of America", Monograph p., 421. In my private library.

4. *Courses of Instruction.* By this time the course of instruction had changed materially since 1903. It is interesting to note the courses of instruction offered from 1908 to 1922.

For the first year: Bible Stories of the New Testament; Reading; Spelling; Writing; Composition; Arithmetic; Apostolic Bible Stories, and Singing.

For the second year: Bible Stories of the Old Testament; Reading; Translation, Grammar; Spelling; Composition; Church History; Writing; History, and Singing.

For the third year: Bibelkunde; Literature and Composition; Church History; World History; Mennonite History; Grammar and Composition (English); Physiology and Music.

For the fourth year: Teaching of the Old Testament; Bible Customs; Mennonite History; Literature and Composition; Latin and Bookkeeping; Rhetoric and Composition (English); Pedagogy; Physiology; Practice Teaching and Bible Study.

The courses offered in 1914 were much the same with perhaps Geology added.

In 1922 the German subjects offered were: Grammar, History, Bible Stories, Bibelkunde, Training Class, Composition, Oratory, Literature, and Writing. The English courses offered were: Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, U. S. History, Spelling, Geography, World History, Physiography, Elementary Algebra, Grammar, Literature and Bible Reading.

The Training Class (Sunday School Teachers' Training) was begun in 1914 and continues to date, those completing the course receive the State certificate. The enrollment of students for 1908, reached 96; for 1914, 133; and for 1923, 90. Evidently interest in the school has been decreasing since the war, just what one may expect in view of the High School and College influence in recent years. The 90 pupils attending in 1922-23 were mostly smaller children and the instruction was naturally of an elementary nature.

5. *Rules and Regulations.* The rules of the institution give one a fair notion of the ethical, social and religious ideals of the constituency. In 1903 seven rules were given to be observed by students: (1) It is expected of each student that he will enroll and pay

his tuition before attending classes; that he would not leave school before the end of the term; and that he will take up all the required courses, and not quit any subject without the permission of the teacher or the president of the school. (2) It is required of the students, that they will observe study hours very carefully. . . . . To attend the morning devotions regularly, and to attend the class examinations; and not to go to bed later than ten o'clock and not to get up later than six o'clock. (3) Young men and young women are not to associate with each other; the same rule also applies when only one party is a student. Neither shall both sexes live in the same house except in case of permission of the teacher. (4) Sunday shall be kept holy, first through regular attendance at a Church of Mountain Lake in the forenoon, and a Bible study of the institution in the afternoon; second, through keeping away from visiting in the streets and roads, and attending questionable gatherings or any other questionable place. (5) Good behavior shall be observed by avoiding first the use of liquor and the visit of any place where it is sold; second, the use of tobacco in any of its form; and third, the use of profane and impolite talk; fourth, visiting the theatre or circuses; fifth, ownership of a gun; sixth, disorderly and impolite behavior; and seventh, the destruction of school property. (6) Observance of good ethics is expected of all students, first by keeping clean personally in the school-room; second, in good behavior with reference to citizens, students and teachers; third, through observing the customs of the Christian institution. (7) Order must be kept through avoidance of noises within the school building; second, by loud talking during the school hour, and third, through marking or scratching building, furniture or other school property.*

The rules and regulations for 1914 were much the same with the addition of such rules as would naturally effect a more mature student body. From 1903 until 1914 the student body was composed of more mature students and the rules and regulation varied accordingly, but from religious, moral and ethical standpoint were practically the same.† The same is true concerning the rules of 1922.

*Catalogue—1903.
†Ibid .....1914.

6. *Student Activities.* Athletic activities were little encouraged. There were no interscholastics of any kind. There was a Literary Society organized under the direction of the teachers. Literary and musical programs were regularly rendered, the purpose of which was more than mere entertainment. These programs were intended to give the student opportunity for self-expression in the development of his or her ability before the public.

7. *Present Status.* Since the war there has been a decided decrease in both courses offered and students. In view of the developing High School in the community, the growing interest in collegiate education and more advanced standards, it has been difficult for the Board and the teaching force to maintain interest in the local institution. The restricted use of the German language also during the war had a direct bearing upon the work of the school.

It is likely that the school will continue some kind of existence so long as the generation which immigrated from Russia lives, which naturally can not be many more years. It will likely never be anything more than an elementary school as the younger generation is attracted more to the public and the High School. What is true at this place is more or less true of all the other schools of this class in other western States and Canada. The people who came from Russia will likely continue to demand such schools; but the American born generation will find a decreasing interest in the institution and an increasing interest in the High School and the College as well as the University.

The work and value of these German Preparatory Schools must not be discounted. They have served largely and very efficiently in various ways. They have brought about a spirit of cooperation among the Churches interested. They have preserved the German language. They have been an inspiration to many young people to gain an education who otherwise never would have gone to school. It has opened the way for many young men and women to enter college and the university who today are found holding responsible positions in various fields. It has qualified many Sunday School teachers. About thirty of the men, products of the Mountain Lake School, have en-

tered the ministry. Six have gone as missionaries to India; one to Africa, and two have entered the China field.

Before concluding this chapter it should be noted that in Kansas the first German Preparatory School was opened by Reverend P. P. Balzer in 1874 immediately upon his arrival in this country from Russia. He taught for several years in a sod house. He built for himself a home in 1878 and into this home he took the young men who desired to prepare for the teaching profession and gave them the proper courses of instruction. The first year he had only three students, besides his lower classes; they were H. D. Penner, Peter Buller, and C. P. Richert. The first was later instructor at Bethel College, minister at Hillsboro, and later still superintendent of the Bethel Hospital in Newton. The second became minister in the Alexanderwohl Church, and now the Goessel Church. The third entered business in Elbing and later in Gotebo, Oklahoma.

It was not long, however, until Balzer had all the students that he could accommodate. He continued his teaching until his election to the Eldership of the Church multiplied his duties to such an extent that he was required to give up his teaching.

The next Preparatory School was opened near Moundridge, Kansas, under the supervision and instruction of J. F. Duerksen, also an experienced teacher from Europe. Duerksen later took a position in McPherson College as instructor in German, and upon his resignation C. C. Epp was appointed teacher in the Preparatory School.

The last Preparatory School was opened in Hillsboro, Kansas, in 1898, by Reverend H. D. Penner. Penner had been a very efficient teacher in Bethel College, but resigned this position when called to the ministry of the Hillsboro Church. Penner's Preparatory School differed from the other two mentioned in so far as he offered English branches also.

In Kansas a Teachers' Society was organized in 1885, the Society in 1900 having seventy-five members, about sixty of whom were active in the teaching profession. The Society met twice each year for the discussion and consideration of educational problems of interest to teachers and patrons. Among some of the important specific work done by the Society was the adoption of a uniform system of

school books, the organization of a German Teachers' Institute, and the publishing of a German song book for use in the schools.

The Teachers' Institute met for two weeks each August. It was, in reality, a brief Normal Course for review and instruction in methods. Instruction was given in Religion, German, Pedagogy, Mathematics, Geography, and Vocal Music, all in the German language. Under Religion came Introduction to Old and New Testament, Bible History and Church History. Under German were Grammar and Syntax. Under Pedagogy, were offered Psychology, School Economy, Methods, and History of Pedagogy. Instruction was given through text books and lectures.

A unique and interesting feature of the work was the "model" recitation, one or two of which were given each day. One of the students was appointed to teach a certain branch as he would teach it in an ordinary school. His pupils were chosen from among the students. After the recitation his work was severely criticized by the others, both merits and demerits being pointed out.*

Finally, it should be said that the men and women who have devoted their time and energy to the work of the German Parochial and Preparatory Schools have served in a larger capacity than they knew. These Schools, the Preparatory Schools, in particular, have been a very important connecting link between the elementary school and the college. As time goes on, however, and the constituency becomes more and more Americanized, and as the High Schools become more efficient, there will be a decreasing demand for the Parochial School, and the Mennonite Educational System will find itself fitted more and more into the American school system.

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*Kliewer—The Parochial School System. Document (1923). My private library.

PART III

COLLEGIATE EDUCATION

CHAPTER XI

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Original Anabaptism and modern Mennonitism, though radical in many respects, are nevertheless dynamic with ideals and principles which must and will find some avenue of expression. Individual freedom of conscience and an open Bible for all men are dynamic ideals and will find institutional expression. The roots of modern Mennonite collegiate institutions run far into the religious Reformation of the 15th and the 16th centuries. Modern Mennonite Colleges are but expressions of the life innate in the denominational system, a life which has been too long suppressed.

Pennsylvania is the cradle of American Mennonitism. This State was slower than New York in responding to the educational awakening of the early 19th century. A free public school system was frequently urged in the State, but not until 1849 was the "permissive" feature of the law of 1834 abolished, and the two hundred districts that had thus far refused to establish public schools were forced to do so. In 1854 the law was again revised and the State system of education was complete.* The coming of the free school system into Pennsylvania caused not a little concern among the Mennonites and Quakers as to the future. The Mennonites gradually changed over to the free school system,† and the movement toward Academies and Colleges soon followed.

BEGINNINGS

The large movements in human history generally center in cer-

* Graves—A Student's History of Education—p, 323

† Proceedings of The Pennsylvania German Society—Vol. IV.

tain personalities. There are several men whose names deserve mention in connection with the beginnings of modern Mennonite colleges. They are:

1. *Abraham Hunsicker.* The year 1848 was a year in the midst of a generation of orators of national fame, Daniel Webster and Henry Clay being among them. Horace Mann also was making himself felt in New England. The free school system was becoming popular. Bishop Abraham Hunsicker, a Mennonite minister in Eastern Pennsylvania, seeing the need of Academic and Collegiate education in his denomination, purchased with his own funds, in 1848, a tract of ten acres of land near Philadelphia, and established Freeland Seminary. The school was opened on November 7th of the same year with an enrollment of three students, the total enrollment, however, before the end of the year reaching seventy-nine.

For twenty-two years this school was successfully operated, Henry Hunsicker, a son of the Bishop, being a leading teacher and factor in the institution. The school was non-sectarian at first, and no school in Eastern Pennsylvania was more popular, students from all denominations and from many states being enrolled. The Hunsickers were men of strong convictions, having started the school with the hope and expectation of getting their chief support from the Mennonites, but instead found their denomination offended, and they themselves finally excommunicated from the Church. It was on February 5th, 1869, that Freeland Seminary became, what is now Ursinus College.* During the seventeen years of Henry A. Hunsicker's principalship thorough and liberal courses of instruction in all the branches of an English, Classical and Scientific education were offered, and a total of 3,791 students were under his instruction. To date Ursinus College has given to the Church (Reformed) 330 ministers and 17 foreign missionaries. Besides 347 graduates have entered the teaching profession, 50 as presidents and professors in college, universities and theological seminaries.† The story of Mennonitism in

* Historical Society of Montgomery County—Vol. III, p, 44f.

† Ursinus College Forward Movement Bulletin (1922)

America would be different today had the denomination taken a proper attitude toward Freeland Seminary.

2. *Joseph Funk.* (1778-1862) During the years 1851-60 Joseph Funk was conducting a school at Mountain Valley (Singer's Glen), Virginia. In 1859 this school advertised courses in Music, Grammar, Elocution and the Art of Teaching Music.‡ For nearly one-half a century Singer's Glen was the source of authority and inspiration in the practice and theory of sacred music. Funk also translated the Mennonite Confession of Faith from the German to English in 1837. About 1847 he founded a printing establishment at Singer's Glen, which was the first Mennonite printing establishment in America. From this press came a number of books, especially music books, written by Funk and his sons. The most famous of these books was "Harmonia Sacra", first published in 1832.*

Joseph Funk was the forerunner of Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, as well as of John F. Funk and the Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart, Indiana, and he deserves a prominent place among the promoters of education in his denomination.

3. *John H. Oberholtzer.* (1809-1895) Oberholtzer entered the teaching profession when he was sixteen years of age and continued for fifteen years. In 1842 he was ordained to the ministry. Having been a teacher he applied his public school pedagogy in the pulpit with unusual success. He introduced religious education into his Church and was instrumental in organizing the first permanent Sunday School in the General Conference. He also became the editor of the first Mennonite periodical published in America, the "Religiöser Botschafter", the first issue appearing on June 9th, 1852. In this paper Oberholtzer frequently urged the necessity of education.

Before the free public schools came into Pennsylvania a group of citizens, farmers in particular, would frequently join and engage a teacher for their sons. Occasionally they would unite in building a schoolhouse. Near Boyertown lived a Mr. John Ritter with a large family of boys. Ritter built his own schoolhouse, a two-story build-

‡ Wayland—History of Rockingham County, Va. p. 293.

* Wayland—The German Element of the Shenandoah Valley—p. 172.

ing, the second floor being used for a schoolroom and the first floor for his pigs. It was in this schoolroom that Oberholtzer was engaged to teach the Ritter boys with others who came in on a payment of tuition. It was not unusual for the Ritter boys, with intent and premeditation, to break up the school by arousing and stimulating the appetites of the pigs to such an extent that the confusion of the quadrupeds on the first floor made it impossible to continue pedagogically on the second. This building, used for this double purpose, is still standing and is known as the "Pig-Sty Schoolhouse".

THE RISE OF COLLEGES

The purpose of the present thesis, will not require the recording of details, or many interesting facts, in connection with the origin and development of Mennonite Colleges. The historic development of each institution is fascinating, in fact, a bit exciting, at times. Only the salient facts and movements will be noted with the view of interpreting the general educational tendencies in modern American Mennonitism.*

THE WADSWORTH SCHOOL (1868-1878)

The educational zeal of such men as Hans Denck, Menno Simon, Felix Manz, Conrad Grebel, and Balthasar, and Christopher Dock was destined to find more adequate and effective expression in the world. From Hans Denck and Menno Simon to 1868 was a long span, and had it not been for such men as Christopher Dock, the educational fires likely would have died out. The school at Wadsworth, Ohio was a result of long years of effort against great odds. It was on May 20th, 1861, that the General Conference of Mennonites of North America, in their second annual session at Wadsworth, officially adopted resolutions approving the establishment of a Theological Institution, and the spark kindled by Dock and his predecessors broke into flames. Daniel Hege presented the major argument

* Note: In my monograph, Education Among the Mennonites of America, are nearly 500 pages of facts and details concerning Mennonite Schools and Colleges. Every effort has been made, and no stone was left unturned, to secure every fact and to record the same. My private library.

for such an institution approaching from two points of view, namely, (1) The unification of American Mennonites, and (2) The spread of the Gospel of Christ.*

The argument met with general approval and Hege was elected to take the field in the securing of funds, a task which he found most difficult because of the newness of the venture as well as of the Civil War which created a most perplexing situation. The Eastern District Conference at once took favorable action and gave the movement every possible support. It was on November 22nd, 1863, that Hege returned to his home at Summerfield, Illinois with a total of $5.738.58 from twenty-four congregations and a few isolated persons. On November 30th, eight days after his return, he died having developed typhoid fever during his tour.

In 1863 the Conference directing the drafting of a constitution for the school, which, among other things, contained the following:

"Only well qualified men, thoroughly in harmony with the Mennonite cause, should be employed. The school was to be conducted in the German language; however, English should also be taught. The course of study should occupy three years. Admission was granted upon satisfactory certificate of good character, to young men not less than eighteen nor more than thirty years old. The students should spend three hours a day at manual labor for the sake of their physical and mental health and for the benefit of the institution. According to a later arrangement each student should pay one hundred dollars for instruction, board, lodging, washing, fuel and light. In the curriculum greatest prominence was given to the study of the scriptures. The direct management of the school was delegated by Conference to a committee of Supervisors composed of three members. This committee had authority to act for the Conference. . ."‡

During the summer and autumn of 1866 a school building was erected on a one hundred and three acre farm near Wadsworth,† and the dedicatory services were held on October 13th and 14th of

* Conference Proceedings, 1861
Krehbiel—History of The General Conference—p. 83

‡ Krehbiel—History of The General Conference—p. 118f.

† Note: The building was begun in 1864.

the same year, with the main address, based on John 7:37-38, was given by Rev. John H. Oberholtzer. Addresses were also made by Christian Krehbiel, A. B. Shelly and John C. Krehbiel. Because of the lack of teachers the school was not opened until January, 1868.‡

In the program of courses three departments were arranged, namely, (1) Theology, (2) German and Elementary Branches, and (3) English and The Sciences. The subjects taught in these departments were: Bible History, Christian Doctrine, German and English Grammar, Reading, Orthography, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Geography, Natural History, Penmanship, Pedagogics, Church History, Secular History, Music, Singing, Foreign Languages and Drawing.

In the early catalogue mentioned above are the following entrance requirements and rules: (1) Each one who comes to receive instruction in this institution must bring along a written testimony concerning his moral character, and if he comes from another school, then concerning his honorable discharge as well as his school knowledge, and hand it to the faculty, which then will decide whether he will be permitted to enter. (2) Any one not obeying the house rules shall be corrected by the principal of his disorderly conduct who shall conduct him in Christian love to obedience and betterment and according to the agreements of the entrance requirements. With reference to his conduct each pupil must show a Christian conduct and be upright and true in word and deed. No pupil shall show himself outside the campus without permission of the principal and much less in places that are questionable or even destructive.*

Student life was more or less in keeping with Mennonite ideals of the time. Not much was done in athletics. Physical exercise was encouraged. Each student was required to work some each day as a matter of defraying expenses. Daily assignments were made. Some did stable work; some peeled potatoes; some carried wood; some did

‡ Christliche Bildungs-Anstalt der Mennoniten Gemeinschaft, undated, but evidently the first catalogue.

* Note: I have taken the entrance requirements and rules from the German as literally as possible which will account for the peculiarities and irregularities in English.

carpentry; others shoemaking and wood cutting. Daily prayers and devotional scripture readings were observed. Everything moved with German regularity.

As time went on the usual course of events succeeded each other in natural and regular order. A lack of experience in the management, the prevailing educational ideals, the perplexing debt which was growing annually, the internal friction, the loss of respect and regard for the school by the students all contributed to the loss of confidence on the part of the Church and the local community.

It was about 1877 when the Western District Mennonite Conference (Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma) was organized. The West had been supporting the Wadsworth school liberally and desired to see it prosper. At time reports from the school were encouraging; at other times discouraging. The Russian immigration during the 70's drew money and attention away from the school. Misunderstandings among the faculty members, misunderstandings and perplexities concerning the debt added to the embarrassment: In most of these difficulties neither patience nor forbearance were exercised. An attempt was made by some unknown person or persons on the night of July 3d, 1875 to burn the building.

Repeated efforts were made to save the school. Mennonite students became less each year. In 1875 the school had a total of thirteen students, six being Mennonites. Debts and internal difficulties still prevailed. A committee, composed of A. B. Schelly, J. H. Moyer, Christian Krehbiel, J. H. Funk, Daniel Krehbiel, S. F. Sprunger, and David Goertz, was appointed by Conference to adjust matters internal. The findings and report of the committee indicate that van der Smissen had assumed authority which did not belong to him and besides that he was not able to fully enter the spirit and sympathies of American people.

Following this adjustment another committee was appointed, namely, Christian Schowalter, Christian Krehbiel, Peter Sell, and Daniel Baer, whose duty it became to devise plans for the future management of the school. The plans suggested by this committee provided for a theological and a German department, besides a Normal School conducted in the English. Women were now admitted

and in 1876 four lady students were registered. From this time the Normal School was the more popular. The school year was divided into four sessions—Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. The course of study included all the common branches, besides Rhetoric, Elementary and Higher Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Physical Geography, Philosophy, Physiology, Botany and Vocal Music.

The Normal School made some progress under the headship of A. S. Shelly having at one time as many as sixty students. It was then called the "Excelsior Normal School". It was during the year however of 1878 that the Conference members lost courage and proposed to sell out the plant. The property was accordingly sold in July for the sum of $5,000.00. After all property was sold there still remained a debt of $685.38. The East and the West paid the debt but the school was gone.

This did not mean that school work in the Denomination was abandoned. According to the committee report the school was to be transferred to a more suitable place where the German language was the medium of expression. The West favored the East however when opportunity presented Kansas welcomed the institution.

But the institution was not a failure, in fact it did a fine and remarkable piece of work during the brief years of its existence. In the Spring of 1871 the first graduating class of five men completed the three years Theological Course.

The Wadsworth school, like that of any other institution, must be judged by its finished product. It is more clear today than ever that the value of this institution has developed along two main lines:

(1) *Values to the Individual.* During the eleven years a total of 310 entered the institution. During the first nine years 209 different persons attended the school. It can not be accurately stated how many Mennonite young men were among this number, neither does it greatly matter; it is estimated however, that at least 130 were from Mennonite families. For the last two years of the school the enrollment is not accessible, but it is known that the enrollment was larger than earlier years. "Among our ablest ministers both West and East, are some who have secured their education in our (Wadsworth) school. Almost in every church there are some who have at-

tended that institution, and are now exerting their influence as leaders and teachers in Sunday School Etc. . . ."* Among the more influential, many of whom are now dead, are the following: J. S. Moyer, N. B. Grubb, A. S. Shelly, A. M. Fretz, S. F. Sprunger, M. S. Moyer, P. P. Lehman, William Galle, and J. S. Hirschler. All of these men were successfully engaged in the Christian ministry. On the mission field should be mentioned J. B. Baer, I. A. Sommer, and H. R. Voth.

(2) *Denominational union.* Perhaps one of the greatest results of the Wadsworth school is in the closer union which it brought and made possible in American Mennonitism. It was an undertaking which called for the united and cooperative effort of the Churches. Money was needed and for the first time Mennonites in America entered the one same enterprise. During the eleven years of the school not less than $31,700.00 was contributed to the work. Seventeen churches were represented in the financial support. The 130 Mennonites from many sections of the Church who attended the institution during the first nine years meant a closer fellowship among the Churches. The institution did accomplish things much worth while and while it closed its doors early the spirit of the movement is going forward today with greater force than ever.

BETHEL COLLEGE

It was on November 15th, 1877, that a number of ministers and school men met in the home of Rev. H. Richert near Goessel, Kansas to consider the possibility and advisability of establishing a denominational school in Kansas. After due consideration resolutions were adopted to the effect that a central school was to be established; both German and English courses were to be offered, and teachers were to be prepared for district and parochial school teaching. The Western District Conference on December 14th, of the same year considered the resolutions, appointed a committee to draft a plan for a Mennonite Academy, and to report at the next Conference session. It is due and just to this movement in Kansas to keep clearly in mind that it

* A. B. Shelly—Christliche Friedensbote—1879

was not a competitive move with the Wadsworth school as the West was in favor of continuation at Wadsworth and adopted resolutions accordingly.*

When the Wadsworth School closed its doors in 1878, the General Conference at once gave directions to its Mission Board to establish the school at a more suitable place, and that the work of the school was not to be abandoned, but to be placed on a more permanent basis, and more advanced courses offered. In 1879 it was decided to establish the school in Kansas. It was not until September 13th, 1882, that the school opened at Goessel, about twelve miles north of Newton, with twenty-one students and with Rev. H. H. Ewert in charge. Here the school continued for one year. In order to secure more room and better opportunities the school accepted an offer made by Halstead, Kansas, nine miles west of Newton, and moved to that place in 1883 and continued there until 1893 as "The Halstead Seminary", or "Fortbildungs-Schule".†

In the Seminary at Halstead there were two main departments offering the following courses: In the German department was offered, Bible History, Catechism, Grammar, Church History, Bibelkunde, Arithmetic, Latin, Pedagogy and Singing. In the English department, Bible Lessons, United States Constitution, Arithmetic, Grammar, Reading, Penmanship and Geography.

An unusual and interesting piece of educational adventure was carried on in connection with the Halstead Seminary in that of an Indian school. Children from the Mennonite missions in Oklahoma, through cooperation with the United States Government, were brought to Halstead and educated. The school was conducted in much the same way as was the public school and practically the same courses offered. Until 1888 about thirty-three Indian children received instruction at this place.

It was agreed in 1883 that the Seminary stay at Halstead for a period of five years, at which time the permanent location was to be determined. Newton was bidding for the institution and at the end

* Krehbiel—Hist. of The Mennonite General Conference—p, 262
† Mennonite Year Book and Directory—1917, p, 27

of five years made an offer of $100,000.00 in case the school would locate permanently at Newton. The Western District Conference was not ready to accept the offer unconditionally, but did decide to accept on condition that a School Society be organized within the Conference which Society was to assume all responsibility in carrying the proposition into effect. The institution at Halstead was to continue as a Preparatory School, and both schools were to be granted equal privilege in soliciting funds in the denomination.

Evidently because of the counter offer of the Western District Conference, the original offer of Newton did not go through. However, Newton did give $20,000.00 in cash and forty acres of land, the School Society was organized, and "The Bethel College Corporation" was formed under the laws of the State of Kansas and the College was established.

Perhaps it is true, at least in some measure, that men are not always rational, that they act frequently upon impulse, and then proceed to present elaborate and logical reasons for their actions. At any rate the first annual report of the Directors, among other things, present the following as a justification for the College, not quoting exactly:

The conviction that the College is necessary is not only founded upon the hopes of the enterprise in Bethel College alone; but it has grown out of the observation and the experience of the past. A considerable number of young men have attended the institutions of other denominations . . . namely, Oberlin College, The Baptist Seminary, Rochester, N. Y., The Evangelical Seminary of St. Louis, Union Theological Seminary of New York, The Presbyterian Seminary, Bloomington, N. J., and the Methodist Colleges of Missouri and Iowa, and the Universities of other States. The fact that many Mennonite young people are now in other institutions is evidence in itself to the fact that the Church needs her own institution. To deny our young people the privilege of education in these other institutions and give them nothing at home would not be right. Other schools have done much for us and we are dutybound to do something for ourselves, not only for our own young people, but for others. A good College will be very attractive to the Church. Legitimate in-

ducements within the Church is the best way of holding young people away from unjustified outside attractions. Besides this a good central institution will do much toward unity in the denomination in that it will draw the leadership closer together. "Bethel College will give an opportunity to the sons and daughters of Mennonite families to gain an education within the pale of their own Church, as well as to pay the debt of gratitude to other denominations by opening wide the doors of the institution, so that all may have an opportunity to partake of whatsoever advantages may be offered."*

On October 12th, 1888, the cornerstone of the main building was laid with appropriate and interesting ceremonies. Because of many unfavorable conditions, financial and otherwise, the building could not be completed before 1893, when on September 20th, the doors were opened and the work was inaugurated. Between the laying of the cornerstone and the completion of the work in 1893, weeds and sunflowers grew up around and higher than the unfinished walls, which fact furnished a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction, as well as opportunity for gossip, for the enemies of the movement. But Bethel College lives today and her enemies are passing unhonored.

At the opening of the institution the course of study consisted of a Preparatory Course of two or three years, an Academy Course of three years, and a College Course divided into junior, middle and senior classes.

The Preparatory Course (Vorbereitungs-Kursus) offered, Biblische Geschichte; Lesen und Aufsatz; Schreiben; Grammatik; Reading; Grammar; Arithmetic; Orthoepy and Spelling.

The Academy Course (Akademischer-Kursus) of three years offered, Bibelkunde; Literaturgeschichte und Aufsatz; Weltgeschichte; Grammatik; Bible Lessons; Physiology and Bookkeeping; United States History and Civil Government; Physical Geography; Arithmetic; Reading; Latin and Grammar for English Students. This constituted the first year in Academy.

In the second year, Bibelkunde; Literaturgeschichte und Aufsatz; Kirchengeschichte; Latin; Rhetoric; Physics and Botany; Algebra and German were offered.

* Annual Report of Directors—1887-88

During the third year, Leben Jesu; Studien in der deutschen Literatur; Weltgeschichte; Latin; English Literature; Pedagogy; Geometry and Grammar.

The College Course (Collegial-Kursus) offered, for junior classes, Katechismus und Glaubenslehre; Latin; Griechisch; Mathematics; Weltgeschichte; English Literature. For the middle class, Exegese; Altes Testament; Griechisch; Mathematics; Natural Sciences; Logic; Deutsche Literatur; English Literature; and for senior class, Exegese; Neues Testament; Griechisch; Psychology; Mathematics; Deutsche Literatur, and English Literature.*

From 1893 to 1910 Rev. C. H. Wedel served as head of the institution and rendered most efficient service. Year by year equipment was added and new buildings erected. The Seminary at Halstead was declared "temporarily" closed by Conference in 1893, which of course meant closed forever,† and not long afterwards all the buildings and equipment were donated to Bethel College. The internal life, ideals and standards of the College experienced a normal growth in the right direction. The religious spirit was always strong and wholesome. Student activities at first were few, but as the institution grew in experience student activities also grew. The Conference took frequent and favorable action during the Wedel administration. In 1899 it was urged by Conference that a Chair of Theology be established through which evangelists and missionaries might receive specific training. Upon the death of President Wedel, Rev. J. W. Kliewer assumed the presidency. Prof. J. H. Langenwalter, however, serving as acting president from 1910 to 1911.

From 1911 to 1918 was something of a stormy period due more directly to the influences of the war. The institution, however, made good progress. The faculty grew, not only in numbers, but in quality as well. The first Bachelor of Arts graduates went out in 1912. In 1913 the gymnasium and auditorium was built by the Alumni. Efforts, with good results, were also made to bring the College and the Conference closer together. The Y. M. and Y. W. C. A., Student's

* Annual Catalogue—1893-94

† Western District Conference Report—1891-93

Volunteer Band, Literary Societies, Oratorical Union, Athletic Association, Young People's Lecture Course, Science Club, Glee Club, Etc. were organized and work of superior excellence was done.

The years 1918 to 1923 were years of readjustment. Conference action during this period centered primarily in three questions: (1) The Conference and Corporation union; (2) Academic freedom and points of doctrine in relation to the faculty, and (3) A five year program for endowment and buildings. It was agreed between the Conference and the Bethel College Corporation that in case the Conference would raise $100,000.00 for endowment purposes, the Corporation would grant to the Conference six of the thirteen members of the Board of Directors. The matter of academic freedom was the common problem which faced most denominational schools following the war. The building and endowment program called for $500,000.00, a large undertaking, but to date has been making good progress. In 1920 President Kliewer resigned to make a world tour in the interests of missions. The writer succeeded President Kliewer for one year and resigned to accept the call to the Presidency of Witmarsum Theological Seminary, at which time Dr. J. H. Langenwalter was elected to the presidency of the College, serving until 1924, Rev. Kliewer being re-elected in 1925. During the academic year 1922-23 a total of 284 students registered in the institution, 136 being men and 137 women. The faculty consisted of twenty-two members of well qualified persons.

The results of the three decades (1893-1923) can hardly be estimated. The mission fields of India and China, and those among the American Indian, as well as the Christian ministry at the present time have scores of men and women who have received their training in Bethel College. The Alumni Association has grown beyond the expectations of the most optimistic. The names of H. H. Ewert, C. H. Wedel, David Goerz are among those which shall always be remembered in connection with the early days of the institution. Wedel and Goerz evidently gave their lives for the institution in the struggle against great odds and unjust criticism, but "Their works do follow them."

THE ELKHART INSTITUTE (1895-1903)

The story of this institution would read like a novel had one time and space in this connection to relate it. But we must content ourselves with following briefly the main lines of development. This institution was established by the Old Mennonite Conference, or rather by a corporation of men in the Old Conference. The institution grew out of the convictions of such men as Dr. H. A. Mumaw, Rev. John S. Coffman, Rev. J. S. Hartzler, Herman Yoder and Lewis Kulp. Dr. H. A. Mumaw, on Oct. 2d, 1882, opened the Elkhart Commercial and English Training School, on the third floor of the Rice Block in Elkhart Indiana, offering Academic and Commercial courses primarily. It was an evening school at first, co-educational and had for its purpose, "To supply persons engaged during the day with the needed facilities for acquiring a practical business and English education."* The following year this institution was known as "The Elkhart Normal School" and for a brief time was located in Goshen, Indiana, and while in Goshen was known as "The Goshen Normal School and Business Institute."

In the autumn of 1894 the Elkhart Institute was founded in Elkhart, and in 1895 a building was erected on Prairie Street, which became the home of the institution. Frequent press notices in the Elkhart City papers (Elkhart Truth in particular) indicate the popularity and progress of the school during its early days. For one year the school continued in the old Shiloh Field, G. A. R. Hall. In 1895 The Elkhart Institute Association was formed and incorporated with fifteen stockholders.† The articles of incorporation show the aim and purpose of the Association to be that of providing an institution of learning under Christian influences, an institution which shall rank with the leading denominational schools, maintaining courses of study in the ancient and modern languages, the sciences and literature, history and philosophy, as well as religion and morals. It is the aim to train men and women to clear, independent thought; to cultivate in each his own individuality, by original investigation. The aim is not

* School Bulletin—1882

† Elkhart Institute Catalogue—1896

to be sectarian in any sense,* but to be positively and emphatically Christian in administration and work.†

On August 21st, 1894, The Elkhart Institute opened with a registration of four students the first day, which number increased to 35 during the year. The building on Prairie Street was dedicated on February 11th, and 12th, 1896, the leading address of the occasion being made by Rev. John S. Coffman on the subject, "The Spirit of Progress." In this address Coffman proved himself a quarter of a century ahead of his day, and had the Old Conference been true to this address her story of education would be brighter today and hundreds of young people and intelligent persons who have left the Church would still be numbered in her ranks. But as usual, they stoned the Prophets and their children make paths to their sepulchres. Coffman was modern and aggressive in his thinking and he laid the foundation in his early death for a liberal education and original thinking in his denomination, and though he be dead, yet he speaks.

The general Church attitude at first was favorable toward the school, at least toward the idea of having a school. The Indiana Amish Mennonite Conference passed resolutions in 1899 urging her young people to patronize the Institute.‡ The General Conference (Old Conference) of 1900 adopted favorable attitude and recommended support.*

There were several courses of instruction offered by the Institute: (1) The Latin-Scientific Course of four years; (2) A Normal Course of two years; (3) A Bible Course of two years; (4) A Seminary Course for women of two years; (5) A Commercial Course of two years, and (6) A Shorthand and Typewriting Course of one year. Practically all of the Academic Courses were offered in these courses and not very much, if anything, above Academic.

To N. E. Byers, now dean of Bluffton College, must go the

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* Note: The President of Goshen College in 1917 made reference in public address to the fact that the College was not "sectarian" for which remarks he received severe criticism. How the human mind does leak!

† Elkhart Institute Catalogue—1896, p. 5f.

‡ Minute—Amish Mennonite Indiana Conference—1888-1916, p. 85

* Institute Monthly, November and December, 1900.

credit for building the institution from the inside. No man has given himself more devotedly, and in the face of unjust criticism, to the promotion of education in any denomination. The rules and regulations of the institution were those common to institutions in this class. The religious atmosphere was always strong. Y. M. and Y. W. C. A. activities, though not organically connected with the national organization, were carried on.† The institution enjoyed fair health and its growth until 1903 was normal.

But the school outgrew its quarters. In 1901 a committee was appointed to investigate matters relative to a new and permanent location. Effort was made to locate in Highland Park of the same town, but this failed. The city of Goshen made an offer and won. With Goshen's offer of $10,000.00 work was begun on the new building in June, 1903 and by September of the same year the doors of Goshen College were open.‡ The Elkhart Institute property was sold to the Mennonite Brethren in Christ for $6,000.00 who attempted a school but in a short time closed.

During the short period of its existence The Elkhart Institute made an unusually large contribution to progress and effective service in the Old Conference. Ministers and missionaries, school teachers and professional men, in goodly numbers have been the finished product. The institution had proved itself worthy of becoming a larger and more far reaching institution which it did in Goshen College.

On June 13th, 1903, N. E. Byers was elected President of Goshen College. The Elkhart Institute Association was dissolved and the Mennonite Board of Education was incorporated in 1905. The organization of the new Board was one of the significant events in the founding of Goshen College, and also because of its constitution, being composed of representatives from the Atlantic to the Pacific, men, the majority of whom had nothing more than a common school education, proved years later to be the downfall of the College. Many of the men on this Board were not in favor of a college education and were elected to the Board, not because they were educators and sym-

† Institute Monthly . . . . . April and September, 1901
‡ Ibid . . . . . June and July, 1903

pathetic toward the institution, but with the view of winning support from the several sections of the Church. Twenty years it required to show that such a Board could not successfully conduct a college. Goshen College was never a legal entity but was always subject to the Mennonite Board of Education which was incorporated, and which Board, during twenty years, not only failed to urge or conduct anything of an adequate program but definitely discouraged the execution of any progressive program suggested or urged by college officials. All the progress made in the College was made through the efforts of men within the institution.

The grounds for Goshen College were broken on June 12th, 1903, in a wheatfield joining the south side of the City of Goshen. It was a new day, one with great hopes and expectations. A suitable program was rendered and the new day for the Old Church had dawned.

The first decade (1903-1913), under the presidency of N. E. Byers, was a period of rapid development, notwithstanding the fact that he was required to work against untold odds. The Mennonite Board of Education was not sympathetic toward his plans and policies, and there was a continuous struggle for ten years when Byers resigned to take his present position as dean of Bluffton College.

From 1903 until 1909 the institution was a Junior College, and from that date until its close in 1923 it offered the standard courses of a full four years' college leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. During the Byers administration the faculty was greatly strengthened, much new equipment was added to the plant, a strong religious atmosphere was developed within the institution, strong men and women were going out of the institution into active religious service, as well as the teaching profession. In 1899 the Elkhart Institute had 100 students and 5 members on its faculty; in 1907 there were 380 students and 11 members on the faculty, with a financial crisis on in 1906.*

The first Bachelor of Arts graduates went out of the College in 1910. Conference and committee reports during the first ten years

* Goshen College Record—March, 1906, p. 97.

were frequent, but generally of such a nature which either evaded or extended the real problems instead of solving them. "Efficiency experts" in the educational profession were sacrificed. Peculiar forms of dress were continuous demands by members of the Board of Education as fundamental and important, while among the constituency these were growing increasingly unimportant. The breach between the Board and the College, as well as between the Board and the constituency, increased from year to year, until 1913 the cleft had reached a point that the future seemed hopeless, and president Byers, with several other members of the faculty, resigned, leaving the institution in a precarious condition. There was a heavy indebtedness, the financial support being almost wholly gone and it was a serious question whether the institution would continue to live at all. But the patient rallied and a second decade was entered upon.

The years 1913 to 1923 may be conveniently divided into three periods: (1) First period of integration; (2) Second period of integration; and (3) Period of disintegration. The first period covered the years 1913-1918; the second period covered the years 1918-1922, and the third the year 1922-1923.

It was the fine spirit of cooperation on the part of the faculty, the student body and constituency, that promoted the second decade with a good deal of hope and bright prospects. In spite of staggering handicaps,* the new administration determined to be loyal to the founders of the institution and to the Church which it represented. Positive effort was made in recognition of the rights of the rising generation of students in giving them a genuine college education, a training which would fit them to think clearly, originally and independently, to live effectively and to serve efficiently their day and generation.†

The program of the second decade was three-fold: (1) To erect

* Note: The purpose of the author in the present work can well be served without noting perplexing and unpleasant details in connection with the financial situation of the Board as far back even as 1903. Practically all the men who were financially responsible are still living and it will serve the author's purpose quite as well, to record successes rather than failures.

† Mennonite Year Book and Directory—1916, p. 16 and 23.

a modern science hall; (2) To raise $200,000.00 for endowment: (3) To establish on the same campus a School of Theology. The first was accomplished, the second was not, and the third was guaranteed by an initial subscription of over $26,000.00 by C. H. Musselman, his parents, sisters and near relatives in the form of a John S. Musselman Memorial.

There were three minor items in the program: (1) The introduction of a standard agricultural and domestic arts departments; (2) The incorporation of the College as a legal entity, and (3) a program of information throughout the Church bringing the institution, its work and needs directly to the hearts and conscience of the people.

The years 1914 to 1918 were unusually difficult and abnormal years due to the World War. The country's finances were turned into channels of war. Local feelings developed more or less against the college due to the non-resistant, war opposing attitude of the constituency. Living costs increased. Many of the men students were required to discontinue their study because of the draft and reconstruction work. The endowment program for $200,000.00 was just well started in the spring of 1917 when the United States entered the war. Entrance into the war, with an epidemic of small-pox on the campus at the same time, terminated the campaign without material success.

But the great hindrance to the progress of the institution was not war, but the incompatible difference in the minds and ideals of the college and the non-college groups responsible for the control and management of the institution. "Education" in the college meant something quite different from what it meant outside of the college. A college and university bred faculty trying to serve a non-college and non-university bred Board of Education tells the story. Conditions grew more and more tense until early in 1918 the situation of 1913 had returned in magnified proportions.*

From early 1918 to 1922 was a continued period of progress. The indebtedness of the Board was raised among the Churches by

* Note: In February, 1918, the president resigned and took a position with Bethel College.

the men in the College, and the institution was placed practically on a standard basis. The student body after the war showed a normal increase and the institution gained influence in the State.

During the years 1918 to 1923 four presidents and one vice president served the institution; George J. Lapp, H. F. Reist, I. R. Detweiler and Daniel Kauffman; Detweiler serving for a time as vice president. As time went on the differences of educational views between the college and the non-college groups came more and more in evidence. Professor Samuel Burkhard, in his keen analysis of the situation, says:*

> "The present crisis of the college and the church at large involves two historic issues. The one is the cardinal doctrine which the church in its early history made one of its chief foundation stones. It is the doctrine of the right of one to live by the dictates of his own conscience. No priest or any other human agency was to stand between a man and his God, nor was there to be any agency to force a man to accept another's interpretation of scripture. Today we are again facing this issue. . . . . The other issue involves the doctrine of non-resistance. . . . . In its deepest significance it is an assertion that every man has a right to live and that we will do all within our power to grant this right . . . . . to live means that one shall be free to live the life that God has planned for him. . . . . It was this insistence upon the right to live within the freedom that God gives to every man that made our fathers break open the cage and bid adieu to the theologies and traditions of Catholicism."

This is no mean analysis and time will more and more vindicate the wisdom of the statement. It is the question of whether or not the historic principles of freedom of conscience and non-resistance dare be tolerated in education. It was the accumulated perplexities and problems resulting from a negative answer to this question which led the Board, in the Spring of 1923, to vote the closing of the institution.

Immediately following the decision of the Board the Alumni Association suspended action on their program for $50,000.00 endowment and inaugurated action in another direction. At their Annual Meeting (1923) the Association appointed a committee whose duty it became to aid the officers of the Association in formulating plans and directing any work that might come before the Association.

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* Burkhard—The Case of Goshen College.

This committee was composed of the following persons: I. R. Detweiler, J. J. Fisher, A. E. Kreider, J. S. Yoder, R. L. Hartzler, F. S. Ebersole.

The committee set itself to the task in hands and after careful review of the situation reported as follows:

> "Whereas the students of Goshen College have expressed a desire for the advice of the Alumni Association in regard to their educational work for next year;
>
> And inasmuch as the Mennonite Board of Education has decided to close Goshen College for the coming year, it is the opinion of the Alumni Association that the ideals of Goshen College can best be perpetuated in a Mennonite institution rather than a Christian College of another denomination.
>
> After due consideration of the educational advantages, the religious and moral life, we have decided to recommend Bluffton College as the best fitted to conserve the fine Christian ideals that existed in Goshen College, and therefore advise all college students who expected to enter Goshen College to make plans to enter Bluffton College this year."

This report, dated August 16th, 1923, was scarcely made public when the sentiment throughout Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Ontario, and parts of Pennsylvania was changed from Goshen to Bluffton. Money and students turned toward Bluffton College and Witmarsum Seminary. It remains for some future historian to record the final results of the present course of events.

An interesting interpretation of the action of the Board of Education in closing the school is given by one on the inside of the College and thoroughly acquainted with the facts. He says:

> "The action taken by the Board contrary to the express wish of the Church is significant and will still further complicate a serious situation. It is another illustration where inefficiency and a lack of insight and foresight in one phase of Church work has a demoralizing influence on the work of the entire Church. A wise leadership could easily have avoided much of this demoralizing tendency. . . . Now that the voice of the Church of the Middle West has been disregarded what shall be done to help our young people? . . . . These young people have been deprived of a college because the nature of their problems have not been understood and because the institution which undertook to aid them in the solution of their problems was misunderstood and misinterpreted, and, above all, because the high ideals which inspired those who promoted the work could not be appreciated. . . . . The scattered hopes and loss of confidence in those who are recognized as leaders in the Church because of the lack of wisdom which

> brought Goshen College into its present state is a great misfortune to the Church and it will take years to overcome the harm that has been done. . . . ."*

An attempt is being made, after one year of closing, to reopen the institution on a basis which may be satisfactory to leading spirits on the Mennonite Board of Education. It was voted by the Board to reopen the school in September, 1924. Sanford C. Yoder, working toward the Bachelor of Arts degree in the University of Iowa, was elected president. Noah Oyer was elected dean, and C. L. Graber was elected business manager. The plan is to institute three departments: College, Bible and Academy.†

Concerning the opening and reorganization of the College President Yoder, among other things, says:‡

> "In securing instructors it shall be the aim to secure men and women who are properly trained and fitted for the particular fields in which they are to teach, and such as are not only trained but also able to present their subjects. We earnestly solicit the prayers of the Church in our behalf that we may be able to secure such a staff of instructors as will be in full harmony with the position of the Church and will actively cooperate with the administration and organization in carrying out the policies of the Church under which we labor." *

Whether or not the old and much loved Goshen College ever opens its doors again it is most evident that the time, the energy, the sacrifice and the money spent are still of eternal value. Goshen College for twenty years has been the educational salvation of the Old Church. From 1910 to 1923 the institution graduated 185 persons

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* The Goshen College Record—May-June, 1923

† Gospel Herald—March 13, 1924.

‡ Ibid . . . . . November 8, 1923.

* Note: It may be of interest to note that with the reopening of the College in 1924, the following faculty was engaged: S. C. Yoder, President (Mennonite); Noah Oyer, Th. B., Dean (Mennonite); S. W. Witmer, M. A. (Mennonite); Daniel Lehman, M. A. (Methodist); H. S. Bender, M. A., B. D., Th. M. (Mennonite); A. E. Weaver, M. A. (Methodist); Silas Hertzler, M. A., B. D. (Mennonite); Alta M. Malloch, M. A. (Presbyterian); D. H. Unsel, M. S. (Seventh Day Adventist); Ernest Correll, Dr. oec. publ. (Lutheran); O. T. Rodman, M. A. (Disciples); J. F. Slabaugh, A. B. (Mennonite); Minnie Kanagy, A. B. (Mennonite); Elsie Mae Landis, A. B. (Mennonite); Frank Blough, Mus. B. (Mennonite).

with the Bachelor of Arts degree. Among these graduates are about twenty-five ministers of the Gospel doing most efficient service, and a comparatively large number of missionaries. Besides these there are fifty or more ministers who at some time studied in the institution but never graduated. A large per centage of the graduates have entered the teaching profession, a number having found their way into University faculties. In view of all this it still remains in the minds of some few persons for "our educational system to prove to the Church that Church schools are of real value to the Church."*

Goshen College has by no manner of means been a failure, and it is still the faint, but fond hope of some liberal hearted and open-minded persons that somehow under Providence Goshen College may again be established and regain its original standing and standards, and that the work which had made such satisfactory progress and was so successfully done, may be continued, and that the blunderings of the past may be forgotten and future generations saved the embarrassment of inadequate apologies.

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* Kauffman—The Conservative Viewpoint—p. 29

CHAPTER XII

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Concluded)

INTRODUCTION

Large and significant contributions to the progress of American Mennonitism have been made by The Wadsworth School, Bethel College, The Elkhart Institute, and Goshen College. Besides these there are still other active institutions in the denomination which, if properly directed, are destined to figure largely in the future of Mennonitism.

BLUFFTON COLLEGE

The closing of the Wadsworth School left some men with a restless conscience. And besides, a closed institution did not leave an agreeable picture to be passed on to succeeding generations. The rise of Bethel College, in part, balanced the accounts. But even this left the Eastern States with no institution of higher learning east of Elkhart, Indiana. In view of this both the Middle District (General) Conference, and the Eastern District Conference, felt a serious need of a collegiate institution further east.

It was in 1894, at Fortuna, Missouri, during the annual session of The Middle District Conference, that the need of such an institution was brought to the attention of Conference in the reading of a paper by Rev. N. C. Hirschy on the subject: "What Can The Middle District Conference Do for The Educational Interests of Our Denomination?" The paper was convincing in its presentation and favorable action toward the establishment of a school was taken by Conference. At a later session a committee was appointed to investigate the matter and report accordingly. Among the recommendations of this committee it was indicated that the school shall first be a Preparatory School with an academic course of study; that it shall be built on a small and reasonable scale, without great expense and entirely free from debt, and that it shall be entirely under the manage-

ment of the Conference. In 1898 the Conference met at Danvers, Illinois, upon invitation from the Central Conference of Mennonites, and the school question was warmly (perhaps hotly) discussed. But Conference acted favorably upon the report of the Committee, the school organization effected, and decision was reached to locate the school at Bluffton, Ohio. A building and financial program was later adopted (1899), and the movement was well on its way.* A bit later a constitution with rules and regulations for conducting the school were drawn, and the corner stone of the first college building was laid on June 19th, 1900.

The aim and purpose of the institution "Is to offer to young people an opportunity to obtain a sound Christian education at a low cost, and to assist them in preparing for the various avocations of life. The aim of the school shall be to meet existing educational needs of our churches. It shall be a decidedly Christian school. The principles and doctrines to be maintained are those set forth in the constitution of the General Conference of the Mennonites of North America."†

It was a further purpose of the organizers of the school that the institution should meet the needs for higher education in the denomination. It was also definitely desired to prepare young people for the work of the Sunday School, Young People's Societies, and the Christian pulpit. It was for these reasons that special emphasis was placed on the teaching of the Bible. It was a religious interest primarily that prompted the promoters to establish the institution.

"Central Mennonite College", as it was known from 1900 to 1913, was opened to students on November 5th, 1900, with twenty students enrolled, and with Rev. N. C. Hirschy as president. Only the Academic, Normal, Commercial and Music Departments were open the first year, no regular college work being done before 1903, and then only in mathematics. The Bible Course covered two years; the Academic, four years; the Normal, three years, with Junior College added in 1905.

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* Minutes of Educational Committee, p. 12
The Review—Nov. 1899.

† The Constitution—Section III, Part I.

The Bible School was organized to fit men to become preachers, missionaries, Bible and Sunday School teachers. The school was open to students from all denominations, both men and women. Requirements for admission to the Bible School was preparation equivalent to graduation from the Academy. In special instances students whose educational training was deficient were admitted to such courses as they could take to advantage. Instruction was given in the great doctrines of the Bible, Church History, Old and New Testament, and in the preparation and delivery of sermons, as well as practical work. Students in the Bible School were permitted to carry courses in the College and the Academy without extra charge.

From 1900 to 1913 normal progress in the institution was the experience. The Junior College was developed.* During the first five years 195 students matriculated, 119 being of Academy and 8 of Junior College grade. The same five years resulted in nineteen graduates.† Decision was reached also to endow a special Bible Chair.‡ The religious atmosphere of the institution was enhanced and regular vesper service was introduced.** New buildings were erected and the student attendance materially increased.†† After eight years of faithful and untiring service President Hirschy resigned. The usual perplexing administrative and financial problems followed for several years. Professor E. J. Hirschler served as acting president for a time when in 1910 Dr. S. K. Mosiman was elected president. A forward movement was put on and definite efforts were made to secure a larger endowment.‡‡ During the first eleven years of the institution 466 students had been matriculated. Until 1913 there were 71 graduates and the total valuation of the plant was about $30,000.00.

The period from 1913 to 1921 has been one of rapid advancement. In 1913 there was a demand in different parts of the de-

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* Bluffton College Record—June-July, 1905
† Ibid . . . . . May and August, 1905
‡ Minutes of Educational Committee—p. 62
** Bluffton College Record—May, 1908
†† Minutes of Board of Trustees—p. 73-75
‡‡ Bluffton College Record—Mar. and October, 1909.

nomination for a stronger spirit of cooperation in educational work, the same to be crystalized in a central Mennonite College offering graduate work. In the spring of 1913 Goshen College was offered the opportunity to become this central institution. This was at the time when Goshen College was approaching its crisis at the close of its first decade, and the leading spirits of the Mennonite Board of Education squelched the idea before the men in Goshen College had any opportunity of giving the matter consideration. As a result the movement crystalized at Bluffton, Ohio.

A new epoch in the educational history of American Mennonitism was begun when five different branches of Mennonites agreed to meet on May 29th, 1913, in Warsaw, Indiana, and again on June 24th, in Chicago, to consider ways and means of cooperating in the work of higher education among the Mennonites as a whole. It was found that about 1,400 young Mennonites in the United States and Canada were attending institutions of higher learning annually; that there were several hundred attending schools of other denominations, or State institutions; a number had done work in foreign universities and many holding responsible positions in American Universities. In view of these, and other conditions the Warsaw meeting "Resolved, that it is the sense of this meeting that an institution be established, representing the various branches of the Mennonite Church, giving the under-graduate and the graduate work of a standard college (courses leading to A. B. and M. A. degrees), the theological and biblical work of a standard seminary. . . . ." The proposed school was to be located at Bluffton, Ohio, in connection with The Central Mennonite College. "Bluffton College and Mennonite Seminary" was the new name adopted for the institution and the new epoch was on.*

A new faculty, accordingly, was organized, several of the Goshen College men going to Bluffton in the spring of 1913. A new spirit was in evidence, new departments and courses were added and the union educational movement was on its way.

From 1913 to 1921 the Mennonite Seminary was an organic part of Bluffton College. A satisfactory number of students were in at-

* Bluffton College Record, July, 1913.

rendance each year. In 1921, the Seminary having outgrown its quarters, and seeing a larger field of service, became a separate and independent corporation under the control of six leading branches of the denomination.

"Few denominational colleges can point to a better record in the production of leaders for the altruistic walks of life than Bluffton. Since the reorganization of Bluffton College in 1914, and the granting of higher degrees in 1915 there have been granted 237 A. B. and A. M. degrees. Not included in this number are 71 graduates of Central Mennonite College with diplomas from the Junior College and Academy. These 308 graduates are distributed as follows:

"20 are foreign missionaries, including three who are under appointment to sail in the near future; 13 ministers of the Gospel; 2 medical mission students; 2 theological students; 6 "Y" secretaries; 13 college and university teachers; 6 women married to ministers; 5 women married to college professors; 19 high school superintendents and principals; 98 high school teachers; 4 music teachers; 16 graduate students; 41 business and farming; 2 college librarians; 46 women married most of whom taught from 1 to 5 years; 1 student abroad; 7 physicians and dentists; 2 in government research work; 1 in secretarial work; 4 women at home.

"Among former students who did not graduate are 11 missionaries; 15 ministers; 2 "Y" workers; 10 college teachers; 2 superintendents of schools; 4 physicians; and about 225 teachers in grades and high schools.

"Accordingly there have gone out 31 missionaries; 28 ministers, 8 "Y" workers, 23 teachers in colleges, and more than three hundred are in educational work."*

TABOR COLLEGE

Tabor College was founded and is controlled by the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America (Brüder-Gemeinde). This Church was organized in Russia in 1860. Upon coming to America about 1875, they had among them a few educators who saw the need

* United Campaign for Christian Education, 1924.

of an educational system. In 1885 they organized in Kansas a School Society which had for its aim the promotion of the educational interests of the Church. For a time this Conference patronized The Halstead Seminary which was controlled by the General Conference. In 1892, in annual conference, a school was suggested for Henderson, Nebraska. From 1875 to 1892 there were conducted small parochial schools in different sections of the Conference. In 1898, in annual Conference, the question was raised as to the propriety of uniting with McPherson (Dunkard) College in educational work. Though the Conference did not act favorably, yet the school friends in Kansas placed J. F. Duerksen in the German Department of this College and paid his salary through freewill offerings. The College was glad to welcome such a move and during the first year ten Mennonite students were registered. In 1899 Conference voted approval of freewill contributions toward the salary of Duerksen. In 1901 the suggestion was again urged in favor of a Conference school and a movement was started to raise funds. In the meantime the chair in McPherson College was maintained and by 1904 the number of students enrolled reached twenty-five. In 1905 the Conference voted to discontinue support at McPherson. During the seven years at McPherson a total of 249 Mennonite students were registered.

The development of the school movement in the Mennonite Brethren Conference was similar to that in the other Conferences. Tabor College, during the years 1905 to 1918, witnessed the usual experiences of the small denominational college. Tabor College, in fact, did not open until in the autumn of 1908, when it registered thirty-nine students on the opening day. At the opening of the school academic courses, in both German and English departments, were arranged. At the end of the first eleven years, 1918, the faculty numbered fifteen members and the regular student enrollment was about 200. In 1918 the departments of Academy, Theology, Commerce, Music, Art and Expression were enlarged. In the same year a College department was also added.

From 1918 Tabor College witnessed the common post war problems, with the added misfortune of losing the college plant by fire on April 30th, 1918. Temporary arrangements to continue the school

were made until a building program could be executed. A building fund of $100,000.00 was launched and a new building was promoted.*

It was on the 12th of September, 1920, that the new college building was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies. The school year was opened with great enthusiasm and with an increased attendance, reaching a total of 354 during the year. Thirty-eight diplomas and certificates were granted in the spring of 1921.

In connection with the erection of the new college building a new ladies' dormitory was also erected. This building is known as the Mary J. Regier Ladies' Home, due to the fact that the building was made possible through a gift of $15,000.00 by Miss Regier. The building is three stories and is fireproof. It is 80 feet long and 34 feet wide. The first floor contains the kitchen, three store rooms, and a large dining hall. The second floor is provided with reception room, wash room and students' room, and the third floor is given to student rooms. This building was used for school purposes until the main college building was completed. *

Certain rules and regulations are always needful in the management of such an institution as Tabor College. In this institution it is expected that students conduct themselves in private and public as is becoming to respected members of a Christian society. Tabor College does not pose as a place where young men and women may go in order to have a "good time". Proper recreation is provided from 12:00 M. to 1:30 P. M. and from 4:30 to 7:00 P. M. All families taking student roomers are required to see to it that students are in their rooms at 7:00 P. M. All students are expected to keep the Lord's Day holy, and attend religious service both morning and evening. All students who find no Church of their own denomination are expected to attend either the Mennonite Brethren or the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church. Mutual visits between men and women students are permitted only with the special permission of the faculty. The use of tobacco and intoxicating liquor is not tolerated. By his enrollment the student agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the school.*

* Tabor College Herald—June, 1919.

On May 20th, 1919, the new college building was begun and in the autumn of the same year the doors were opened for work, the dedicatory services being held on September 12th, 1920.

The aim and purpose of Tabor College from the beginning has been, "To benefit humanity in general culture and biblical information, and the dissemination of general culture and biblical information, and the development of character through the school atmosphere and influence. We attempt to live up to the conviction that the education of the children is the first duty of every generation, and that no education is complete unless it make provision for the development of the body, soul and spirit. Holding that religious training is essential to all, the school encourages the study of the Bible, and the religious life among its students. We wish to propagate the Gospel of Peace and Good Will to Men and advance the Kingdom of Christ both intensively and extensively."†

The religious life of the institution is promoted through Y. M. and Y. W. C. A. activities which consist primarily of prayer meetings, mission bands, Bible study, Etc. The literary activities are such as are common to every college in this class.

The growth and development of the institution since 1908 have been very satisfactory. In 1908 the school started with three teachers and thirty-nine students. In 1923 there were seventeen members on the faculty, representing in their training The University of Kansas, Rochester Theological Seminary, Oklahoma State University, Yale University, Colorado University, Salt Lake Business College, and Witmarsum Theological Seminary. The departments of study have been extended. The library has over 3,000 volumes. The 1923 catalogue shows the previous year with a total of 60 students registered in the college department; 166 in the Academy; 74 in Bible; 29 in Art; 93 in Piano; 36 in Voice; 73 in Business; 20 in Violin; with a net enrollment for the year of 352.

FREEMAN COLLEGE

The Mennonites of South Dakota immigrated from Russia and Germany, primarily from Russia. During their pioneer days (1873

† Tabor College Catalogue—June, 1919.

to about 1900) they were content with private and public schools. Like the Mennonites of Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma, they were strict in maintaining the German language. They were also strongly in favor of biblical education such as they were not getting in the public schools. There also developed a demand for higher education. These were the conditions which furnished the occasion for "The South Dakota Mennonite College,"* later "Freeman College", and now (1924) "Freeman Junior College and Normal School."

The first definite effort toward the establishment of this institution was that made by the Churches in the Freeman, South Dakota, community in 1903 in the appointment of a committee whose duty it was to investigate the matter and to make such report and recommendation as seemed to them advisable. A building program was instituted and a building erected the same year, though the Articles of Incorporation had been drawn up in 1900.

Article VI in the Articles of Incorporation provides for the establishment of the following Department: Classical, Scientific, Normal, Preparatory, Music, Commercial, and Bible. The Classical department to include the usual four years College Course. The Scientific department to include Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Botany, Zoology, Geology, Paleontology, Modern Languages, such as German, English and French, also History, Philosophy and Political Science. The Normal department to correspond with like departments in State Institutions. The Preparatory department to include Classical, Latin, Scientific and Literary courses. The Music department to include both vocal and instrumental instruction. The Commercial department to include the courses generally given in such department. The Bible department to include regular outlined courses in biblical instruction.†

The first annual catalogue (1903-04) shows but two members on the faculty: J. R. Thierstein as Principal, and "Lehrer der mathematischen and naturwissenchaftlichen Fächer," and Rev. H. A.

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* Second Annual Catalogue.

† For details in courses of study see monograph—"Education Among The Mennonites of America, p. 299. My private library.

Bachmann, "Lehrer der biblischen and geschichtlichen Fächer." The school year extended from September 5th to May 26th and was divided into three terms. The student enrollment for the first year reached a total of 110. From the beginning the religious life within the institution was given special attention. The rules and regulations of the school were very similar to those of other schools in this class.

The Churches in and around Freeman which were responsible for the establishment of this institution were members of the Mennonite General Conference. It is one thing to start an institution and another to justify it. In 1905 a justification of this institution was given in the following: "In the absence of a school of their own that was adapted to their peculiar needs, the young people (of The Mennonite Church) either had to suppress their desire for learning or patronize institutions outside, and the results of these sojourns have not always been satisfactory. Hence, thoughtful men of the denomination began to realize the necessity of schools of their own, in charge of positively Christian teachers, where the young people might receive instruction in the truths of the holy Scriptures, and where they would have an opportunity to prepare themselves for the work of teaching in the district, parochial and Sunday Schools, or for other useful vocations in life. . . ."*

While the institution was strictly denominational, yet, it was open to young people of good moral character, "Irrespective of sex or church affiliation." The institution offers itself in particular to those who desire an education founded upon strictly Christian principles. Candidates for admission were required to furnish satisfactory evidence of good character.

Progress in the development of the institution from 1903 to 1913 along the lines of the purpose of the school were quite satisfactory. Strict discipline was always observed and student activities developed normally.† In 1913 Dr. Eddison Mosimann was elected president of

* Second Annual Catalogue—1905-06.

† Annual Catalogue—1912-13.

the institution. The beginning of the second decade marks something of a new beginning in the development of the school. While the aim and purpose of the institution remained much the same, yet, from year to year the aim and purpose was restated with slight variations. More emphasis by this time was placed on preparation for College entrance for those who desired to continue their education. The German language was still strongly emphasized. Very little college work had been done before 1913 due to the fact that faculty and equipment did not justify the attempt. The intention was, however, to develop the institution into a Junior College as soon as possible. In 1913 the total enrollment was 141, while the Alumni Association had a membership of 41 graduates. Early in 1917 President Mosiman resigned,* and was succeeded in this position by A. J. Regier, a former student of Goshen College, and an A. B. graduate of Bethel College. By the year 1918 the institution showed something of a cosmopolitan character. "Up to the present time (1918) we have 103 regular and 23 special students enrolled. Of this number 43 are boys and 83 are girls. Among the regular students there are 49 freshmen, 31 sophomores, 10 juniors, and 10 seniors. There are 85 Mennonites, 14 Lutherans, 3 Evangelical, and 1 Reformed. Of the Mennonite Churches the following three have the greatest representation: Salems, 35; Salems-Zion, 17; Friedensberg, Avon, 7. There are 51 Schweizer, 17 Huterisch, and 17 Low Germans among the 85 Mennonites."†

In 1923 the annual catalogue represents the institution as "Freeman Junior College and Normal School". The institution now has a faculty of eight members, all except one having the Bachelor of Arts degree, and one having the Master of Arts degree, and one the Bachelor of Science. Every member of the present faculty (1923) has received training in one or more of the Mennonite educational institutions of America. The Alumni Association has a membership of 155, dating back to the class of 1906. The enrollment during the past year (1922) stood as follows: Academy, 44; Intermediate

* Freeman College Bulletin—March, 1917.

† Ibid . . . . . November, 1918.

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Normal, 61; Elementary Normal, 2; Four Year Bible Course, 2; Unclassified, 3; Piano, 52; Voice, 7; with a total of 124 enrolled.

Since the establishment of the school 203 students have graduated from the Academy or the Normal department. The following will show the rate of increase in graduates each year: Class of 1906 there were 4; 1909, 6; 1914, 10; 1917, 13; 1920, 10; 1921, 22; 1922, 25; 1923, 22, and 1924, 33.

It is likely reasonable to assume that for a number of years to come there will be a place in the Northwest for a Junior College such as the one at Freeman. Hundreds of young men and women have been, and will be, reached educationally through this school who never would have ventured out into some other institution. There can be no question but that the institution has met a great need in the Church and will continue to do so.

HESSTON COLLEGE

Mennonitism began its journey down the centuries in 1525 in the spirit of individualism, or freedom of conscience. Other than the Bible and the individual conscience there was no centralized denominational authority for the first one hundred years. The Mennonites had no written Confession of Faith, which was universally accepted, until 1632. It is a matter of real regret that the Mennonites during the more recent generations have misappropriated the principle of individualism. They failed to observe that a strong individualism, that freedom of conscience, was the basis for strong and effective cooperation rather than the occasion for disunion.

The seventeen branches, as well as the comparatively large number of collegiate institutions, in a denomination with a constituency of perhaps 125,000, is due, in a large measure, to the work of a certain class demanding uniformity of doctrinal belief, a thing quite foreign to the "Faith of Our Fathers" during their first one hundred years. As a result Mennonites today know little of cooperation either among themselves or with others. The least divergence in matters of faith or practice, during the past generation or two, has

been the occasion for disunion, disruptions and divisions. The source of the difficulty is traceable to inefficiency in leadership.*

Goshen College was doing the educational work of the Old Mennonite Conference very successfully and with a high degree of satisfaction to the constituency. From the days that Goshen College opened its doors in 1903 there were men in the church, both east and west, who had no college, and in most cases, no academic training, who were dissatisfied with the institution and its work.

"Hesston Academy and Bible School", as it was at first known, was in part a product of this dissatisfaction in the effort to build a school which did conform to the ideas of this group of men. Several items were frequently mentioned by the promoters of the institution as sufficient reasons justifying another school. There was the geographical reason. In 1908 the distance from Kansas to Indiana seemed very great to many people, and many young people would not get to college at all unless there was a denominational school nearer home. There was the doctrinal reason. Criticisms had been preferred against Goshen College on points of doctrine, chiefly on the matter of the "inerrancy and verbal and plenary inspiration" of the Bible. The promoters of the new school believed in "The full and verbal inspiration of the Bible as God's word, its inerrant preservation, and its absolute authority,"† and set out to build a school which was to accept this statement of the doctrine.

There was, in the third place, a diversity of educational ideals. To some men revelation was something which took place in the past only; all worth while truth had been spoken; and education meant simply handing over to the rising generation ready-made and predigested truth from which there could be no deviation and concerning which there could be little or no question. They were opposed to anything like cooperation with other branches of Mennonites.‡ Go-

* Note: From the days of the founders of the denomination until about fifty years ago there were no college or university men in Mennonite pulpits. Until about fifteen years ago there were no regularly theologically trained men in their pulpits. Mennonite Church divisions started, as a rule, in the pulpits, not in the pews.

† Conference Record Kans.-Nebr. Mennonite Conf. p. 187

‡ Ibid . . . . . p. 180

shen College held to academic freedom, to openmindedness, and the inalienable right of student and professor to think and to test any statement in the laboratory of time and experience.

There was a fourth factor which needs to be taken into account in this connection, namely, that of "conservatism" and the more liberal and aggressive type of thinking. Goshen College represented the educated constituency and naturally, was more aggressive. The less educated constituency through its leadership was more conservative, attempting to conserve the past with its traditions, customs and formal doctrinal statements, while Goshen College, her sons and daughters, looked toward a vital, progressive and constructive program for the future, and believing that the future was filled with good as well as the past.

There was also the desire on the part of the promoters of the Hesston School to have all members conform to formal dress rules and regulations, the men to discard the use of neckties and to wear the Episcopal clerical coat, and the women to discard the hat and to wear the plain bonnet, neither of which is Mennonite in origin.

The promoters of the Hesston School were also opposed to the use of musical instruments and to this day allow none in the institution,* while Goshen College, from the beginning gave large place to instrumental as well as vocal music. These, with other things, were among the motives giving rise to a second school in the Old Mennonite Conference.†

It was in 1907 that the Kansas-Nebraska Mennonite Conference raised the question of establishing a school in the west, to which reply was made as follows: "Resolved, that this Conference believes that the cause of Christ would be advanced by establishing such a school with a consecrated faculty strictly in order of the Church and that we request the Mennonite Board of Education to take steps to establish such a school somewhere in the West."* The Missouri-Iowa Mennonite Conference took similar action at about the same time. On

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* Conf. Record Kans.-Nebr. Conf.—p. 45

† Note: Among the leading promoters of the school were G. R. Brunk, T. M. Erb, D. H. Bender, D. J. Lapp and Daniel Kauffman.

* Conference Record, Kans.-Nebr. Men. Conference—p. 139f.

November 14th, 1907, the General (Old) Conference took action, appointing an investigating and locating committee,† which committee set to work and in August, 1908, decision was reached to build a school and to locate same at Hesston, Kansas.

During the period from 1909 to 1918 the institution operated under the name, "Hesston Academy and Bible School." A building, serving both as dormitory and for class work, was erected in 1909, and housed the school until 1918, when another building, now the main building, was erected. The Academy opened on September 22d, 1909 with 21 students enrolled, and with three departments of study organized, namely, Bible, Academy, and Normal. The Normal department attempted to meet the State requirements for teaching. The Academy was similar to the average High School of four years; and the Bible department offered a two years elementary course of study.

It was the aim of Hesston Academy to avoid the "dangers" seen by some men in other institutions. It was the aim of the promoters of the Academy to train a generation of students who would conform to church traditions, it being objected that Goshen College was not doing this, which objection had some grounds.* In more recent years the aims of the Academy were to furnish facilities for obtaining an education under Christian influences, "Preparing for teaching public school, College entrance, and usefulness in life."†

During the years 1909 to 1914 the institution graduated fifty students; 17 from the Bible department, 28 from the Academy, and

† Minutes of Mennonite Board of Education.
The members of the committee were: Bishop John Blosser, D. H. Bender, T. M. Erb, S. B. Wenger, C. D. Yoder, G. R. Brunk, and J. E. Hartzler. The committee was a combination of two committees, and there was not entire agreement as to the advisability or location of such school.

* Note: The Goshen College constituency recognized the fact that customs and traditions were many, coming and going with the changing conditions of society; and for this reason contended for abiding principles, for a full and free Gospel, rather than for the traditions and customs of the past seventy-five years.

† Youth's Christian Companion—Sept. 24th, 1922.
Also annual catalogue—1919.

12 from the Normal department. Following 1914 the demand grew for a College Department and a more advanced Bible Department, and from that date (1914) the institution was known as "Hesston College and Bible School", there being a Junior College department added as well as more advanced Bible work.

The educational outlook and attitude of the institution in 1919 was well expressed in the official College organ in the following words: "With notable exceptions the colleges, universities and even theological seminaries of our country have been stranded on the rocks of liberalism, destructive higher criticism, skepticism, and open infidelity. Unsanctified scholarship with its boast of 'historical method', 'traditional interpretation', and 'unbiased conclusions,' had already set aside the authority of the scriptures, and has exalted the authority of human reason and human judgment in its stead. The Bible is seldom any more taught as being God's divinely inspired word. Present-day writers of text-books for the study of theology seldom quote scripture or take it as the basis of their work. Theological seminaries on the whole have ceased to be Bible schools and have become instead mere institutions that represent various schools of present day speculative philosophy and nothing more."*

From 1914 to 1918 the College department was of Junior grade. In 1918 the demand was made for a four-year college course leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. It was in the spring of 1918 that the Mennonite Board of Education was asked to grant the privilege of instituting a regular four-year college course. The Board granted the request and the same year the course was outlined. From this time the institution arranged its courses of study under College, Bible and Academy. The Bible department proceeded on the basis of the study of the Bible from both theoretical and practical view point. The Academy covered the ordinary work of the High School preparatory for college entrance. The Normal department was arranged to prepare public school teachers and to meet the State requirements. The Music department offered vocal music only, musical instruments being considered unchristian and inventions of the evil one. The

* Hesston College Journal—1919

College allows from twelve to twenty-four hours credit on Bible for graduation.†

Student activities in the institution are more or less limited, particularly in athletics, there being no intercollegiates whatsoever of any kind.* In religious affairs there is the prayer meeting, Bible study, Mission study and mission bands. There is no connection or affiliation whatsoever with the National Y. M. or Y. W. C. A. Students are not encouraged, rather discouraged, in the matter of attending Student Conventions. Definite efforts are made to keep the students from coming in touch with the great student movements of America. The purpose of this is evident. The idea is to train a generation of students with certain fixed ideas, ways of thinking, and ways of acting, all of which can not be done when a student body comes into vital touch with the great student movements of America or the world.

Persons elected to the faculty of Hesston College are first submitted to a rigid theological test. Among other questions the following are submitted for definite answer:

State briefly your views on the following points of doctrine: (a) The creation of man as compared with the theory of evolution. (b) Inspiration of the Bible. (c) Higher Criticism. (d) The fall of man and its results. (e) Divinity of Christ. (f) Atonement. (g) Repentance and conversion. (h) Regeneration and sanctification. (i) Baptism. (j) Communion. (k) Feet-washing. (l) Devotional covering. (m) Non-resistance. (n) Non-conformity. (o) Secret Societies. (p) Life insurance. (q) Resurrection. (r) Future state of the righteous and the wicked. . . . . If appointed to a position in this institution, would you be willing to conform to the teachings and practices of the Church in the matter of plainness of attire and general separation from the world. . . . ?"‡

It should be noted that through this institution since 1909, a

† Annual Catalogue—1919, p. 26.

* Annual Catalogue—1919, p. 23.

‡ See Printed Question For Prospective Teachers.
"Plainness of attire" means the wearing of the bonnet or hood by women, and the "plain coat" (coat without collar) for the men; the men also not to wear neckties, crushed hats, Etc.

group of young people have been reached and started along educational lines who otherwise never would have been reached. Even though the educational aims and ideals have not been what some have desired, yet, a goodly number of young men and young women have caught a broader vision of life and its possibilities. The institution has caused restlessness, a dissatisfaction, in the lives of some young men and women which evidently will produce unexpected results. The young people who attend Hesston College are of the same human stuff as those who attend any other college. They are not immuned to the educational, religious, ethical, and idealistic germs of modern atmosphere. Even though the germs may lie dormant for a time, one day unawares even to themselves, when conditions are favorable, activity begins and results obtain. There is no vaccination against educational, religious, ethical and social ideals in the modern world. The two strong arms of God, educational advancement on the one side, and scientific discovery and invention on the other, are binding the human race into one body from which there is no escape and in which there is no isolation neither insulation. No College today can live to itself nor die to itself; it is a part of the great collegiate system whether it wants to be or not.

Up until and including the year 1923 Hesston College has graduated 18 students; The Academy has graduated 163; the Normal department, 50; the Bible Academy, 35; and the Bible department, 20. Many of these persons are active in their home Sunday Schools; some have entered the ministry, and a few have entered foreign mission work.

THE EASTERN MENNONITE SCHOOL

When men insist that every item in the Christian religion, every item of faith and practice, must mean one and the same thing to all men of all experiences and for all time, there can be no unity, only divisions into smaller and smaller groups, until finally they vanish and disappear entirely.

The rise of the numerous Mennonite schools is due, in part at least to the fact that the religious leadership of the denomination during the more recent generations has failed to recognize the divine

laws of survival and elimination. A few leaders too frequently have insisted that every Christian doctrine must mean one and the same thing to all men and for all time. And when differences of interpretation or application of certain doctrines arose between groups the first thought was that of starting another school.

The building of the Eastern Mennonite School was further motivated in part by dissatisfaction with Goshen and Hesston Colleges. This dissatisfaction was later expressed by one of the promoters of the Eastern School in the following statement:

> "To this day (1918) General Conference has held aloof from official recognition of our schools and it still remains for those to whom is committed the charge of our educational system to prove to the Church that church schools are of real value to the Church. . . . ."*

In support of the idea that Goshen and Hesston Colleges have not proved their value the Principal of the Eastern Mennonite School says:

"It is superfluous to mention the humiliating but stern fact that our (Mennonite) educational policy . . . . has failed to produce results. The chief reasons for these unsatisfactory results is that the religious emphasis has not kept pace with the intellectual. Denominational interests have yielded to the stronger impulses of having our educational institutions conform to the popular educational standards and State requirements. . . . . A glance at the curricula of our standard colleges reveals the fact that few, if any, religious subjects are listed. Their requirements as a rule are in accord with their own curricula. Hence where there is a strict conformity to such requirements, religious development is practically ignored. The student leaves college filled, it may be, with worldly wisdom, but destitute of the wisdom from above."†

Among other apologies for the Eastern Mennonite School the promoters offer the following: (1) They want a school which is "emphatically Christian." (2) They want a "denominational" school. (3) In view of the fact that more than one-half of the members of the Old Church live in the East, and there being no Mennonite School

* Kauffman—The Conservative Viewpoint—p. 29

† Smith—Mennonite Year Book and Directory—1918, p. 18

in the East, a large number of people would need to go some distance for a denominational school.* This last apology has a grain of truth in it, though Ohio (Bluffton College) is not a great distance from Pennsylvania or Virginia. The first two apologies leads one to think that none of the other Mennonite Schools are "emphatically Christian" or "denominational". It is interesting to note how frequently men do things on the spur of impulse before reason arrives upon the scene and afterwards they seek out and set in order elaborate "reasons" for their action. This is a common human trait.

It was early in 1913 that the first organized effort was made to establish a school in the East, which would have the "hearty encouragement and support of the brotherhood." A general meeting was called at Maugansville, Maryland, on February 17th, and 18th, 1914, at which time decision was reached to establish a school. Favorable action was also taken by the Virginia Conference in the autumn of the same year. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Conference also took "friendly" action.†

The school was started in Warwick County (near Denbigh), Virginia, under the name, "The Warwick Mennonite Institute." According to Sections 1 to 5 of the Constitution the aims of the school would be: To serve as a safeguard for the student life of our young people. . . . . As a means of grace and spiritual incentive for developing more fully and completely the mind of the student along religious as well as in moral and intellectual lines. To organize a department of Bible study to further develop the mission spirit and for the training of workers. To indoctrinate our young people, to offer vocal music courses, and industrial direction for young people.

The Constitution also provided that only persons in full sympathy with the doctrines of the Church should be elected to teaching positions; that all the officials of the school must be in good standing in the Church; that all members of the faculty should comply with the "plain garb" rulings of the Conference; that no form of theology not in harmony with the Mennonite Confession of Faith should be

* Annual Catalogue—1923-24, p. 7

† Mennonite Year Book and Directory—1917, p. 29

taught in the school; that only such text-books should be used in the school as would safeguard the student against higher criticism, evolution, fiction or any other form of popular error; provision shall be made for physical exercise, but all contest games with outsiders shall be prohibited, and musical instruments shall not form any part of the equipment of the school.*

Not long after the school was to open the prompters thought that "Hayfield Mansion", near Alexandria, Virginia, would make a better location, to which all parties concerned agreed. The mansion was a three-story building with 27 rooms, built 160 years ago under the direction of George Washington. Efforts to buy this property with 300 acres of land in connection with it was made but failed. However, the first session of school, consisting of a four weeks' Bible Term, was held at the Hayfield Mansion, January 9th, to February 6th, 1915.†

In 1915 Assembly Park, near Harrisonburg, Virginia, was chosen as the new school site. During 1916 and 1917 two more Bible Terms were held of six weeks each. In the autumn of 1917 a Principal was elected, the faculty organized and the school opened on October 15th, 1917. *

The aim of the school was practically the same as that stated in 1913, namely, not only to save the young people to the Church while getting an education, but to give them a good knowledge of God's Word and to strengthen them in their moral and spiritual life, thus fitting them to be staunch defenders of the faith.†

Recently the Virginia Conference adopted eighteen articles of faith in order to safeguard the people from the "inroads of the false doctrines which assail the Word of God and threaten to undermine the foundations of our faith." These articles represent the so-called "orthodox" position on the following points of doctrine: The Word of God; Existence and nature of God; Creation; Man; Jesus Christ; Salvation; The Holy Spirit; Assurance; The Church; Separation

* Gospel Herald—April 17th, 1913.
† Youth's Christian Companion—June 24th, 1923.
* Ibid.
† Annual Catalogue—1923-24, p. 11

from the World; Discipline; Ordinances; Restrictions; The Resurrection; Apostasy; The Lord's Second Coming; The Intermediate State; and the final State, all of which points must be subscribed to, and loyalty pledged, each year by each member of the faculty.‡

The discipline of the school is very strict. "Brethren and sisters are encouraged to conform to the teachings of the General (Old) Conference . . . . in favor of regulation attire for brethren and sisters. Young men are expected to refrain from wearing flashy neckties and suits, fashionable hats and caps. Young women should avoid wearing low-neck, short sleeve, transparent, narrow or short dresses. . . . Sisters should limit their head-gear to the plain bonnet or hood that can be consistently and appropriately tied. . . . . Anything that violates the Bible teaching I Tim. 2:9-10, and I Peter 3:3-4, in the way of ornamentation, costly or immodestly is strictly prohibited. . . . All books and papers of students are subject to inspection at all times and if unsatisfactory or objectionable must be removed or destroyed."*

To date (1923) the school maintains four departments: Bible, College, Academy and Correspondence. The Bible department provides for three courses, a two-year elementary, a four-year Academy, and a two-year advanced Bible of College grade. The College department is of Junior rank. The Academy offers the regular four years' High School work. The Correspondence courses are practically all elementary and practical Bible courses. The Virginia State Board of Education has accredited the Academy for regular High School work; Pennsylvania and Maryland have done likewise.†

The student activities express themselves through about three avenues, namely, The Young People's Christian Association, Literary Societies, and "Physical Exercise". The first named organization came into action in 1922 and serves much the same as does the Y. M. or Y. W. C. A. in other colleges. Affiliation with National Y. M. or Y. W. C. A., or attending any of their conventions, is positively discouraged, in fact, is not tolerated. The Literary So-

‡ Annual Catalogue—1923-24, p. 12f.
* Annual Catalogue—1923-24.
† Ibid.

cieties, of which there are three, are "not to provide entertainment or display," but to give training. The program is to be conducted in a way so that prayer would be appropriate at any time. Concerning athletics, "all games with other organizations are strictly prohibited. No costumes or uniforms that are inconsistent with Bible teaching on dress or modesty of attire are allowed."*

At the present time (1923) there are ten persons on the teaching staff. The student enrollment for the past year was as follows: Bible Department, 26; College Department, 16; Academic Department, 72; Special Short Bible Term, 49; and the Correspondence Department, 63; making a total of 111 male, and 110 female students. 128 students came from Pennsylvania; 76 from Virginia; 10 from Ohio; 5 from Maryland; 2 from Indiana, and 1 from each Kansas, Michigan, Ontario, and West Virginia. An Alumni Association of about fifty members has also been organized.

The Eastern Mennonite School has a great opportunity in reaching many young people who never would enter any other collegiate institution. Certainly an institution of higher learning is needed in the Eastern section of the denomination. Had the efforts of Abraham Unsicker and his son Henry been properly honored in connection with Freeland Seminary in 1848 and the following ten or twenty years the story of the Mennonites of the Atlantic Coast States would today be quite different. It may not be too late yet, if proper religious and educational ideals are maintained, and a proper attitude is taken toward truth, whether religious or scientific, to build an institution which will be a great factor in Eastern Mennonitism. There is a large future for the right kind of a school in the East. The young people of the East, and the students of The Eastern Mennonite School, are made of the same raw materials, the same instincts and impulses, as those of Goshen College, Bethel College, Tabor College, Hesston College, or any other College for that matter, and with equal opportunities will make good just as others have done. It is not the task of any College to inject into its student body capacities and abilities which they do not have by nature, but to make

* Annual Catalogue—1923-24, p. 24

"available" the capacities, the potentialities, which are in every man and woman by nature. Any college which does this has a future.

WITMARSUM THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

There are at the present time (1924) four Mennonite Colleges in the United States granting the Bachelor of Arts degree, several Junior Colleges, and perhaps a dozen lesser institutions of Academic and elementary grade and one Graduate School of Theology.* There are, in round numbers, 1,500 young Mennonites in these schools annually. More and more is the graduate school, especially in theology, coming into demand. With the rise of the educational status there naturally comes increased demands for an educated ministry. The theologically trained men in Mennonite pulpits number less than two score. Until about three or four years ago there were less than a dozen with the Bachelor of Divinity degree.

In every section of the denomination also may be found High School and College graduates who are demanding of the pulpit a different service than has been given hitherto. It is not a new Gospel that they are demanding, but more efficient preaching and effective

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* MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (1924)

Name	Place	President or Principal
Witmarsum Theological Seminary	Bluffton, Ohio	Rev. J. E. Hartzler, Ph. D.
Bethel College	Newton, Kan.	Rev. J. H. Langenwalter, D. D.
Bluffton College	Bluffton, Ohio	Rev. S. K. Mosiman, Ph. D.
Fortbildungsschule	Goessel, Kan.	Rev. P. P. Buller
Freeman College	Freeman, S. D.	A. J. Regier, M. A.
Goshen College	Goshen, Ind.	S. C. Yoder
Hesston Academy and Bible School	Hesston, Kan.	Rev. D. H. Bender
Vereinsschule	Hillsboro, Kan.	Prof. J. H. Epp
Deutsche Vereinsschule	Mt. Lake, Minn.	Prof. H. O. Dyck, A. B.
Mennonitische Vereinsschule	Moundridge, Kan.	Rev. P. P. Wedel
Mennonite Academy	Gretna, Man.	Rev. H. H. Ewert
Mennonitische Bildungs Anstaldt	Altona, Man.	P. H. Neufeld
Tabor College	Hillsboro, Kan.	H. W. Lohrenz, M. A.
Zoar Vorbereitungsschule	Inman, Kan.	F. V. Wiebe
Deutsche-Englische Akademie	Rosthern, Sask.	Rev. David Toews
Mennonite Academy	Meno, Okla.	Rev. J. B. Epp

religious direction. The passing leadership has been quite opposed to a trained ministry, fearing two things, namely, lest it would do away with trusting to the leading of the Spirit, and that it would bring a salaried ministry. The rising generation, however, is demanding from the rising ministerial force an education adequate to place the teaching from the pulpit on an equal basis with that of the public schools or colleges.

The name of the institution is taken from Witmarsum, Holland, at which place Menno Simons, one of the early leaders of the denomination was born. It is a small, beautiful village in the middle of Friesland, one of the eleven Provinces of the Netherlands. The Mennonite Church in Witmarsum today is not large, perhaps sixty members. A monument to Menno Simons stands today just outside of the village not far from the place where the old Mennonite Church stood in Menno's day.*

It is perhaps difficult to say just where Witmarsum Theological Seminary began. Perhaps the first written and public report urging the establishment of a standard Theological School was that given by the Dean of the Bible School in Goshen College in annual report for the year 1912-13, which report urged additional equipment and teachers which would make possible the offering of full three years' graduate work in theology leading to the Bachelor of Divinity Degree.

But a Theological Seminary in the Denomination had been discussed and urged by individuals and groups of individuals even before 1913. Dean Byers and President Mosiman, now of Bluffton College, President Kliewer of Bethel College, Dean Whitmer now of Witmarsum Theological Seminary, and others, frequently discussed the matter and exchanged letters in which reference was made to the establishment of such an institution.

As previously noted in connection with the reorganization of Bluffton College, at the Warsaw, Indiana, meeting of 1913, the matter of establishing a Theological Seminary in the Mennonite Church was considered and action was taken to establish a Union Mennonite College and Seminary. The two institutions, accordingly, were organized under one Board of Trustees, and continued so until 1921.

* The Witmarsum Spirit—1923, p. 21.

During the first few years the Seminary was not very active. J. H. Langenwalter was elected Dean of the Seminary in 1914 and served in this capacity for about five years. In 1915 J. A. Huffman was elected professor of New Testament. In 1917 P. E. Whitmer was elected professor of Church History.

During the years 1913 to 1921 the Seminary was conducted on the Semester plan, covering eight and one-half months, the courses of study being listed under eleven departments: Old Testament, New Testament, Philosophy of Religion and Religious Education, Systematic Theology, Sociology, Church History and Doctrines, Homiletics and Practical Theology, Comparative Religions and Christian Missions, Public Speaking, and Church Music.

During the years 1913 to 1920 there was an increasing demand for a standard Theological Seminary, independent from the College, and one in which all branches of the denomination might unite in their support. The breakdown of much of the older religious traditions during the great war intensified this demand. In the autumn or early winter of 1919 a call was sent out, signed by four ministers, N. O. Blosser, P. E. Whitmer, Lester Hostetler, and the Author, with three laymen, asking for a conference with those interested on December 27th, 1919, at Lima, Ohio. This gathering marked a long step toward the realization of the institution.

A second conference was held in Elkhart, Indiana, on January 31st, 1920, and a third on April 29th, 1920, in the same city. The results of these conferences were favorable for the establishment of the institution, and that such institution should be a union effort between the different branches of Mennonites. The older line of leadership in general was opposed to such an institution, while the rising generation of leadership was emphatically in favor.* The official church organ of the Old Conference was not in favor of the movement.†

But the movement gained in strength every day. The promoters offered to The Mennonite Board of Education to locate the Seminary in Goshen, Indiana, with friendly affiliations with Goshen Col-

* Printed Report of Elkhart Meeting—p. 5.

† Gospel Herald—January 8th, 1920.

lege, but the Mennonite Board of Education gave the matter little, if any, consideration. A petition was then sent up on January 18th, 1921, to the Board of Trustees of Bluffton College calling for the organization of a Theological School which would be independent from the College, and incorporated under a separate Board of Trustees. This petition was granted during the same month, and proper committees were appointed to proceed to organize the union institution, and the corporation was formed in July, 1921, and the Board elected representing the Old Mennonite Conference, The General Conference, The Central Conference of Mennonites of Illinois, The Mennonite Brethren in Christ, The Mennonite Brethren Church, and The Defenseless Mennonite Conference.

It is the aim and purpose of Witmarsum Theological Seminary "To provide religious education and training in the departments known as: Graduate Seminary, Theological College, and Bible School, and any other department which might be added."* "To serve the special needs of the Mennonite Churches of North America. . . . . The increasing urgency of the call of our Mennonite Churches for well equipped Christian young people to become pastors of Churches, missionaries and Christian teachers has made it imperative to provide an institution to train them for these special tasks. It is the earnest purpose of Witmarsum Theological Seminary to provide as far as it possibly can, the instruction, practice and inspiration necessary to equip its students for efficient service. . . .†

The institution was opened on the campus of Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, on September 13th, 1921, with a qualified faculty of nine members.* The first year registered thirteen men holding Bach-

* Article III, Section 1, Constitution and By-Laws

† Annual Catalogue—1922.

* The 1921 faculty:
John E. Hartzler, A. M., D. B., President. Systematic Theology.
Paul E. Whitmer, A. M., D. B., Dean. Church History.
Jasper A. Huffman, D. B., D. D., New Testament.
Samuel M. Musselman, Practical Theology.
Jacob Quiring, A. M., B. D., Old Testament.
Noah E. Byers, A. M., Philosophy.
J. Norman King, A. B., D. B., Sociology.
Gustav A. Lehman, A. B., Music.
Boyd Smucker, M. O., Oratory.

elor of Arts degree, representing three Mennonite Colleges, and four students of Theological College grade.

Section 2 of Article I in the By-laws of the Constitution of the Institution requires that no one shall be elected to a teaching position in the institution "who is not a person of approved Christian character, who is not a firm believer in the deity of Christ, in his vicarious atonement, or the inspiration of the Scriptures."

It was also agreed by the Board of Trustees and the Faculty of the Seminary assembled in joint session on February 6th, 1924, to go on record as holding the following principles of faith: That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the inspired Word of God "which holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost".

In other matters of faith the Board of Trustees and the Faculty expressed themselves in accord with the historic Apostles' Creed as follows: "I believe in God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only begotten Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hades; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

Three leading courses of instruction are offered with the view of meeting the special and general needs of the denomination. There is the regular three years of graduate work leading to the Bachelor of Divinity degree, demanding the Bachelor of Arts or its equivalent for entrance, and requiring ninety semester hours for graduation. The Theological College requires High School graduation for entrance and requires one hundred and twenty hours for the Bachelor of Theology degree, this degree being equivalent to the Bachelor of Arts degree. The Bible School Course is designed for such persons who have had no particular training and who are interested in elementary Bible work. At the end of two years a diploma is given for

graduation. Students holding the Bachelor of Arts degree may, in connection with Bluffton College, secure the Master of Arts degree.

To the present time the institution has enjoyed a normal and substantial financial growth. Three District Conferences, namely, The Central Conference, The Eastern District Conference, and the Middle District Conference, have assumed each a chair in support. A fourth, The Northern District Conference, has assumed part of a chair; and a fifth, The Western District, has taken official action for two annual free-will offerings for the Seminary. The Central and the General Conference deserve special recognition for what they are doing, and have done from the beginning, for the institution. The financial salvation of the Seminary rests thus far with these two Conferences.

At a recent session of the Board of Trustees of the Seminary official action was taken to inaugurate a program calling for $200,000.00 for endowment purposes, $100,000.00 for building and at least $25,000.00 for scholarship fund. The student body has grown beyond the hopes of the promoters of the institution. The graduates of the Seminary from 1913 to 1925 are found in many states and Canada, as well as in China and Africa. At present there are 25 graduates, 15 with the Bachelor of Divinity degree and 8 with the Master of Arts.

What seemed to some a few years ago as an ecclesiastical luxury has indeed become a denominational necessity. To study in an atmosphere in which the ideals, doctrines and history of Mennonitism are constantly emphasized is a most worthwhile opportunity for any person preparing for service within the denomination. In fact it is an opportunity which no future servant of the Church can afford to miss. The men and women who from the various branches of the Church, study here, find it very agreeable to labor together when they leave the institution. If union among the Mennonites of America ever obtains it will have its beginning in an institution such as this.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE OUTLOOK

In February, 1925, the Mennonite Church entered its fifth century as a religious denomination. Four hundred years is a long time when considered in the light of what we have or have not done. Two hundred and forty-two years in free and democratic America is a long time in view of the progress which we have and have not made. Has Mennonitism become a stagnant pool or is it a running stream? Are there sufficient resident forces and potentialities in the denomination to insure a future worth while? Do we today possess sufficient of the "Faith of our Fathers", sufficient of an open Bible for all men, sufficient freedom of religious conscience and freedom of Biblical interpretation, sufficient spiritual regeneration and religious toleration among ourselves to guarantee our continuance as Mennonites? Are we still Mennonites or are we fast gravitating toward Romanism?

Certainly it is more than evident that the future of the denomination depends largely on our attitude toward the educational movements of the present time. If our colleges are encouraged and given their rightful freedom then the future of the denomination is bright. If they are to be suppressed, intimidated and taken off the map, then we may as well surrender now and save the patient further agonies.

As previously noted Mennonitism began with a number of highly educated men in its ranks. As time went on, due to persecutions and poverty, the educated element dropped out and education lost caste. In America, from 1683 to perhaps 1770, such men as Francis Daniel Pastorius and Christopher Dock kept the educational fires kindled. From about 1840 to 1860 the educational torch was carried by such men as Abraham and Henry Unsicker, Joseph Funk, John H. Oberholtzer and a few others. From the time of the Civil War until the present the movement toward higher education has been continually urged by a few leading spirits. There are gaps in the history of

Mennonite education which thus far have not been filled with documentary connections. It is reasonably certain that from the time of the Revolutionary War until the Civil War and later, the Mennonites of America almost exterminated themselves with the discipline which was not only severe, but in many cases unjust and unreasonable.

PRESENT TENDENCIES

There are today at least three general and significant tendencies among the Mennonites of America. The one is toward an extreme conservatism; a conservatism, which in some cases, exalts human authority above the Scriptures and above reason; a conservatism which demands uniformity in faith and conformity in action and conduct to the loss of freedom in both thought and action; a conservatism which believes that virtue lies in exact, formal and literal statements and doctrines, good for all time and for all men, unalterable and unchangeable, under penalty of excommunication, or perhaps ecclesiastical boycott. In other words, it is a conservatism which reminds one acquainted with the facts of history with the state of affairs in the Roman Church in the days of the Anabaptists. It is a conservatism which leads men to act upon the impulse of "fear" before reason has had time to speak, and then proceeds to "frame up" most elaborate reasons for certain lines of action and conduct. The reasoning, in some instances, is perfectly logical, and would be conclusive were it not for the fact that the major premise is wrong.

There is a second tendency, namely, toward a more liberal philosophy of life. The scientific spirit of the 19th and the 20th centuries has found its way into the life of the denomination in a remarkable way. The psychological tendencies so evident in the educational world during the past quarter or one-half century is working with tremendous force, overthrowing much of the religious tradition, and most of the religious educational method. This over-turning of things is not entirely unwelcome to the rising generation.

The urbanization of the rural mind through the telephone, daily newspapers and farm journals, rural mail service, radio and the automobile has brought about a changed mental and religious atti-

tude much to the perplexity of the older leadership.

The sociological changes in American life resulting from the coming of the machine, modern means of travel and communication has taken Mennonitism far from its old social, religious and educational moorings, which, in turn, leads some to fear that the denomination is adrift on a cruel and friendless theological sea, destined soon to vanish on the rocks of agnosticism and despair. To others these changes are but omens of a hopeful and prosperous future.

A third tendency, briefly mentioned, is that of a closer union between the several branches of the denomination. During the last ten years, and in particular during the Great War, this tendency is in evidence. The "All-Mennonite" Conference, now being held triannually, The Mennonite Relief Commission of America, are doing much to bring the branches together into closer cooperative relations. It has been a bit perplexing and hard to explain to more thoughtful people both within and without the denomination, why Mennonites are so ready to forget their differences and to cooperate in times of war and so ready and eager to quarrel in times of peace.

A PRESENT NEED

Perhaps the major weakness in Mennonitism, and the cause of most of the internal difficulties, lies in the fact that the denomination has never set itself to one great and consuming task of world betterment, either religiously or educationally. Mennonitism in many instances, has set its attention so strongly on getting to heaven, that it has over-looked the task, the duty, the opportunity of bringing heaven, in some measure at least, to men on earth. There never will be great accomplishments in the denomination until some great, consuming purpose captures the attention and efforts of its people to the extent that all minor and nonessential differences, likes and dislikes, fade eternally out of sight.

What Mennonitism needs today, above all things, is a great religious, ethical, educational and social objective laid upon its heart and conscience with the authority of Jesus Christ back of it, this objective to be nothing less than the eternal Kingdom of God so earnestly lived and taught by Jesus himself. The objective implies

three things: First, vital and constructive religious education. Second, a didactic evangelism which seeks the divine laws of life, one which is educational rather than dogmatic, vital rather than traditional. And third, a qualified Christian ministry; a ministry which implies a personal experience with God and truth, a divinely inspired vision of the whole world, and a passion for service which knows no retreat or defeat.

THE PROBLEM

The problem of American Mennonitism is three-fold: (1) To harmonize and properly direct the above tendencies to desired ends. (2) To unite the available forces in a constructive religious, social and educational program in contributive service in the Kingdom of God. (3) Efficient and effective leadership which is able to tap the eternal resources of a well endowed people, and to direct these resources into channels of altruistic and constructive service.

Fundamentally, the whole problem is one of leadership. But the ethics of leadership, and the matter of getting the men who should lead, into the place of leadership has always been a problem. Humanity generally is reckless in the matter of following leadership. Nothing is so dangerous and so destructive to society and so detrimental to the future well-being of humanity and civilization generally as a sincere man, yet ignorant, in the place of leadership and giving the wrong "lead" to men. It requires generations to undo the injuries of such a leadership. Mennonitism, along with other denominations, has suffered much at the hands of "sincere" men.

There is but one solution to the problem of leadership, and that is to admit the necessity of leadership, and to admit experts only, and then demand results. Of all the fields of human endeavor demanding intelligence, wisdom, experience, broad-mindedness and open-heartedness, that of leading humanity into the "manhood of the Master" is by far the most responsible. In the field of science, and medicine, and invention we admit experts, we trust them, and we demand results. If results are not forthcoming, the career of the expert ends. If men without knowledge and experience, or genuine credentials, are not allowed to minister to the needs of the physical

body, why should we be less concerned about the spiritual man?

If Mennonitism would live it must admit trained and efficient leadership, a leadership which is not only "good-hearted", but also wise-headed; a leadership which can direct and control to desired religious and social ends the significant movements and tendencies which are now shaping the future of the denomination. Mennonitism has such men within her ranks, and if appropriated to the task, will make large and permanent contributions to the present and future of the denomination.

A PROGRAM

Whatever else may be said or mentioned there are three things which must enter a working program, namely, (1) A return to the "Faith of our Fathers" in so far as it is founded in the New Testament, and a vital and dynamic interpretation and practice of the same; (2) The standardization and promotion of at least two colleges, one in the east and one in the west; and (3) A union School of Theology. Any one and all three of these are not beyond the limits of necessity or possibility.

The founders of early Mennonitism urged a wide margin between themselves and Romanism. Over-head human authority, an infallible human head for the Church, and absolute obedience to this authority was the habit of the Roman Church for nearly eight hundred years. Martin Luther, Zwingli, Menno Simon and others broke away from the old habit. The Mennonites became the most radical perhaps of all in demanding an open Bible, freedom of conscience, the individual and collective right of dissent, and spiritual regeneration as a basis and test of Church membership.

For four hundred years the Mennonites have been in the process of forming the new habit, the direct opposite from the habit formed in the Roman Church during eight hundred years, but there is evidence again and again of reverting to the old habit on matters of authority and infallibility. If Mennonitism would continue and make a vital contribution in the promotion of the Kingdom of God among men it must separate itself farther from the habits of Romanism and dedicate itself anew to its early faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Mennonitism must free itself from the "left-overs", the mistakes and errors of Romanism, against which our fathers protested four hundred years ago.

Mennonitism has been more or less uneconomic in the building of numerous academic and collegiate institutions. As a result of individualism and the right of dissent carried to an extreme the denomination is at present attempting more educational institutions than she is willing to properly support. Two standard, well endowed Colleges, one in the East and one in the West, will meet present needs more efficiently. For the sake of the denomination itself, and in view of its duty and obligation to the world, Mennonitism should in conference fully consider and agree upon a program for collegiate and theological education. Any present institution should be willing to sink, if need be, if that meant the salvation of the denomination and better service to the present and future generations. He that saveth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life the same shall find it, is a principle that works in institutions as well as in individual lives.

The wild pigeon, which seventy-five years ago filled the sky and hid the sun like a cloud in passing, has disappeared to the last bird. Those who have given the problem attention tell us that they became so numerous that they died for want of sufficient and proper food. Too many colleges in a small denomination will make it impossible for any to live and serve as they should and may lead to institutional suicide.

Concerning the matter of a theological school the way to a solution is not far. A recent investigation reveals the fact that the nearly thirty persons teaching Bible in the twelve or more Mennonite schools in America received their Biblical training in twenty-three different institutions outside of the Mennonite denomination. In some respects this is a very good thing. On the other hand it accounts for at least a part of the doctrinal differences within the body which have made it more or less difficult for the various branches to cooperate as they should. If American Mennonitism is to present a solid and united front and become an active and vital force in generations to come there must be a central and theological institution in

which all the various branches of the Church may cooperate. Fortunately, there is at the present time developing such an institution in Witmarsum Theological Seminary on the campus of Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio. Already this institution has grown into the nerve and fiber of the denomination to the extent that a discontinuation of the same would mean serious loss, if not death, to progressive American Mennonitism. The pulsating throbs of this vital organ are felt through the length and breadth of the denomination in the graduates and men who have gone out from the institution. Unless there should develop a case of doctrinal or ecclesiastical apoplexy, which is not likely, the future of American Mennonitism augurs well through Witmarsum Theological Seminary.

For the most effective execution of the program it may do no harm to suggest for consideration the organization of "The United Mennonite Church". The spirit of unity is more Christian than that of disunity. Several of the leading Conferences at present have so many things in common and so few differences that to continue separately is hardly justifiable. Can we not call representatives from three or four of the more similar bodies, draft a constitution agreeable to all on a Congregational basis, provide for bi-annual Assembly for inspiration and fellowship, and then proceed to execute a threefold program, namely, Christian Collegiate education, Missions, home and foreign, and Hospital and home for the aged? Can we not adjust ourselves to each other and to the larger Christian world movements, missionary and educational, thus giving the rising student generation more numerous contacts and greater opportunities in religious service? Will not the life of American Mennonitism eventually depend upon a movement of this kind?

Finally, it should be said, that whatever is done concerning a program should be done soon. The denomination is in a transitional period. Great changes are taking place. In a few years the religious and educational composition will begin to take definite and permanent form, and as it forms then it is likely destined to remain for some years to come. Wisdom suggests that all the educational elements of all the various branches agree in conference on some kind of program which can be made effective and executed efficiently dur-

ing the present century, for it is only on the basis of a cooperative and unified educational program that American Mennonitism can hope to make anything of a worth while and permanent contribution toward the establishment of His Kingdom among the peoples of the earth.

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